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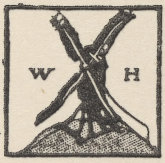
FROM THE HILLS OF DREAM

FROM THE HILLS OF DREAM: THRENODIES, SONGS AND LATER POEMS

BY FIONA MACLEOD

"As Love on buried ecstacy buildeth his tower"

ROBERT BRIDGES



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1907

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"None but God and I
Knows what is in my heart."

SAHARA SONG.

"The thyme and the marjoram are not yet honey."
(EMERSON, OF THOREAU.)

"Rememberest thou, then, rememberest thou,
O hot heart,
How once thou thirstedst
For heavenly tears and dropping of dew."

NIETZSCHE.

TO A MEMORY

THE HILLS OF DREAM

St. John's Eve 1901

There has been twilight here, since one whom some name Life and some Death slid between us the little shadow that is the unfathomable dark and silence. In a grave deeper than is hollowed under the windsweet grass lies that which was so passing fair.

Who plays the Song of Songs upon the Hills of Dream? It is said Love is that reed-player, for there is no song like his.

But to-day I saw one, on these dim garths of shadow and silence, who put a reed to his lips and played a white spell of beauty. Then I knew Love and Death to be one, as in the old myth of Oengus of the White Birds and the Grey Shadows.

Here are the broken airs that once you loved. . . .

"The fable-flowering land wherein they grew
Hath dreams for stars, and grey romance for dew."

They are but the breath of what has been: only are they for this, that they do the will of beauty and regret.

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"The great winding sheets that bury all things in oblivion, are two: Love, that makes oblivious of Life; and Death, that obliterates Love."

"Was it because I desired thee darkly, that thou could'st not know the white spell? Or was it that the white spell could not reach thy darkness? One god debateth this: and another god answereth this: but one god knoweth it. With him be the issue."

AN LEABHAR BÀN.
(*The Book of White Magic.*)

"My wisdom became pregnant on lonely mountains; upon rugged stones she bore her young.

"Now she runneth strangely through the hard desert and seeketh, and ever seeketh for soft grass, mine own old wisdom."

NIETZSCHE.

THROUGH THE IVORY GATE

"Green thou would'st not be plucked, thy purple fruit I longed for. . . ."

THE STEPHANOS OF PHILIPPUS.

"Là-bas, tout nous appelle. . . . Et, qui sait, tous les rèves à réaliser! . . .

"A quoi bon les réaliser . . . ils sont si beaux!"

AXEL.

"Love is as a vapour that is licked up of the wind. Let whoso longeth after this lovely mist—that as a breath is, and is not—beware of this wind. There is no sorrow like unto the sorrow of this wind."

LEABHRAN MHÒR-GHEASADAIREACHD.

(*The Little Book of the Great Enchantment.*)

"The waves of the sea have spoken to me; the wild birds have taught me; the music of many waters has been my master."

KALEVALA.

THE SECRET DEWS

Poor little songs, children of sorrow, go.
A wind may take you up, and blow you far.
My heart will go with you, too, wherever you go.

As the little leaves in the wood, they pass:
The wind has lifted them, and the wind is gone.
Have I too not heard the wind come, and pass?

The secret dews fall under the Evening-Star,
And there is peace I know in the west: yet, if there
be no dawn,
The secret dews fall under the Evening-Star.

THE ENCHANTED VALLEYS

By the Gate of Sleep we enter the Enchanted
Valleys.
White soundless birds fly near the twilit portals:
Follow, and they lead to the Silent Alleys.

Grey pastures are there, and hush'd spell-bound
woods,
And still waters, girt with unwhispering reeds:
Lost dreams linger there, wan multitudes:

They haunt the grey waters, the alleys dense
and dim,
The immemorial woods of timeless age,
And where the forest leans on the grey sea's
rim.

Nothing is there of gladness or of sorrow:
What is past can neither be glad nor sad:
It is past: there is no dawn: no to-morrow.

THE VALLEY OF WHITE POPPIES

Between the grey pastures and the dark wood
A valley of white poppies is lit by the low moon :
It is the grave of dreams, a holy rood.

It is quiet there : no wind doth ever fall.
Long long ago a wind sang once a heart-sweet rune.
Now the white poppies grow, silent and tall.

A white bird floats there like a drifting leaf :
It feeds upon faint sweet hopes and perishing dreams
And the still breath of unremembering grief.

And as a silent leaf the white bird passes,
Winnowing the dusk by dim forgetful streams.
I am alone now among the silent grasses.

THE VALLEY OF SILENCE

In the secret Valley of Silence
No breath doth fall;
No wind stirs in the branches;
No bird doth call:
As on a white wall
A breathless lizard is still,
So silence lies on the valley
Breathlessly still.

In the dusk-grown heart of the valley
An altar rises white:
No rapt priest bends in awe
Before its silent light:
But sometimes a flight
Of breathless words of prayer
White-wing'd enclose the altar,
Eddies of prayer.

DREAM MEADOWS

Girt with great garths of shadow
Dim meadows fade in grey:
No moon lightens the gloaming,
The meadows know no day:
But pale shapes shifting
From dusk to dusk, or lifting
Frail wings in flight, go drifting
Adown each flowerless way.

These phantom-dreams in shadow
Were once in wild-rose flame;
Each wore a star of glory,
Each had a loved sweet name:
Now they are nameless, knowing
Nor star nor flame, but going
Whither they know not, flowing
Waves without wind or aim.

But later through the gloaming
The Midnight-Shepherd cries:
The trooping shadows follow
Making a wind of sighs:
The fold is hollow and black;
No pathway thence, no track;
No dream ever comes back
Beneath those silent skies.

GREY PASTURES

In the grey gloaming where the white moth flies—
When I, quiet dust on the forgetful wind,
Shall be untroubled by any breath of sighs—

It may be I shall fall like dew upon
The still breath of grey pastures such as these
Wherein I wander now 'twixt dusk and dawn.

See, in this phantom bloom I leave a kiss:
It was given me in fire; now it is grey dust:
Mayhap I may thrill again at the touch of this.

LONGING

O WOULD I were the cool wind that's blowing from
the sea,
Each loneliest valley I would search till I should come
to thee.

In the dew on the grass is your name, dear, i' the leaf
on the tree—
O would I were the cool wind that's blowing from
the sea.

O would I were the cool wind that's blowing far
from me—
The grey silence, the grey waves, the grey wastes of
the sea.

THE SINGER IN THE WOODS

" Were Memory but a voice. . . ."

WHERE moongrey-thistled dunes divide the woods
from the sea
Sometimes a phantom drifts, like smoke, from tree to
tree:
His voice is as the thin faint song when the wind
wearily
Sighs in the grass, and sighing, dies: barely it comes
to me.

Sometimes I hear the sighing voice along the
shadowy shore;
Sometimes wave-borne it comes, as when on labouring
oar
Dying men sigh once, and die, at the closing of the
door
They hear below the muffled tides or the dull drown-
ing roar.

Sometimes he passes through the caves where twi-
light dies;
His voice like mist from a valley then doth rise,
Or, in a windy flight of gathered sighs,
Is blown like perishing smoke against the midnight
skies.

But oftenest in the dark woods I hear him sing
Dim, half-remembered things, where the old mosses
cling
To the old trees, and the faint wandering eddies
bring
The phantom echoes of a phantom Spring.

Lost in the dark gulf of the woods, his song sinks
low:
I listen: and hear only the long, inevitable, slow
Falling of wave on wave, the sighing flow:
In the silence I hear my heart crying in its old woe.

BY THE GREY STONE

It is quiet here: the wet hill-wind's sigh
Sobs faintly, as though behind a curtain of thick grass.
The vanishing curlew wails a fading cry.

I can hear the least soft footfall pass.
Is that the shrewmouse I hear, or does the night-moth whirr?
I have waited so long, so long, so long, alas!

No one. No one. I hear no faintest stir.
Yet Love spake once, with lips of flame and eyes of fire,
With breath of burning frankincense and myrrh—

Spake, and the vow was even as Desire . . .
Terrible, winged, magnific, crested with flame,
So that I bowed before it, mounting gyre upon gyre. . . .

I see now a grey bird by the grey stone of no name:
It is blind and deaf, and its wings are tipped with mire.
Is it Love's lordly vow or mine own bitter shame?

THE VALLEY OF PALE BLUE FLOWERS

In a hidden valley a pale-blue flower grows.
It is so pale that in the moonshine it is dimmer
than dim gold,
And in the starshine paler than the palest rose.

It is the flower of dream. Who holds it is never
old.
It is the flower of forgetfulness: and oblivion is
youth:
Breathing it, flame is not empty air, dust is not
cold.

Lift it, and there is no memory of sorrow or any
ruth;
The grey monotone of the low sky is filled with light;
The dim, terrible, inpalpable lie wears the
raiment of truth.

I lift it, now, for somewhat in the heart of the
night
Fills me with dread. It may be that, as a tiger in
his lair,
Memory, crouching, waits to spring into the
light.

No, I will clasp it close to my heart, overdroop
with my hair:
I will breathe thy frail faint breath, O pale blue
flower,
And then . . . and then . . . nothing shall
take me unaware!

Nothing: no thought: no fear: only the invisible power
Of the vast deeps of night, wherein down a shadowy stair
My soul slowly, slowly, slowly, will sink to its ultimate hour.

REMEMBRANCE

No more: let there be no more said.
It is over now, the long hope, the beautiful dream.
The poor body of love in his grave is laid.

I had dreamed his shining eyes eternal, alas!
Now, dead love, I know, can never rise again.
Never, never again shall I see even his shadow pass.

A star has ceased to shine in my lonely skies.
Sometimes I dream I see it shining in my heart,
As a bird the windless pool over which it flies.

No: no more: I will not say what I see, there:
Sorrow has depths within depths . . . silence is best:
Farewell, Dead Love: no more the same road we fare.

THE VEILED AVENGER

(FRAGMENT)

A Voice

. . . I am He,
The Veiled Avenger. I am clothed with shadow
The silence and the shadow of your soul
Where it has withered slowly from the light.

Unseen Chorus

The Veiled Avenger speaks. He knows him not.

The Man

I hear a honey voice that murmureth peace,
Peace and oblivion. O ye secret doves
That feed the mind with sweet and perilous breaths
And murmur ever among gossamer dreams,
Bring me the tidings out of the hidden place
Wherein your wings wake fire. Come once again,
wild doves
Of Beauty and Desire and the Twin Flame!
Wild doves, wild doves, bear unto me the flame
That rises moonwhite amid scarlet fire . . .
(*A lapwing wails.*)
O melancholy bird, Dalua's messenger!
I am too weary now for further thought.

The Veiled Avenger

Pillows of sleepless sorrow. . . . Bow your head.
To-night I shall build up for you a place
Where sleep shall not be silent and where dreams
Shall whisper, and a little infinite voice
Shall wail as a wailing plover in your ears.

Then you shall know that shaken voice, and wake,
Crying your own name.

The Man

Again, the wheeling cry
Where in the dusk the lapwing slips and falls
From ledge to ledge of darkness.

Unseen Chorus

He knoweth not
His own bitter infinite cry we hear him cry !

THE BELLS OF SORROW

It is not only when the sea is dark and chill and desolate
I hear the singing of the queen who lives beneath the ocean:
Oft have I heard her chanting voice when noon swings wide his golden gate,
Or when the moonshine fills the wave with snow-white mazy motion.

And some day will it hap to me, when the black waves are leaping,
Or when within the breathless green I see her shell-strewn door,
The fatal bells will lure me where my sea-drown'd death lies sleeping
Beneath the slow white hands of her who rules the sunken shore.

For in my heart I hear the bells that ring their fatal beauty,
The wild, remote, uncertain bells that chant their dim to-morrow;
The lonely bells of sorrow, the bells of fatal beauty,
From lonely heights within my heart tolling their lonely sorrow.

THE UNKNOWN WIND

"*There is a wind that has no name.*" (*Gaelic Saying.*)

When the day darkens,
When dusk grows light,
When the dew is falling,
When Silence dreams. . . .
I hear a wind
Calling, calling
By day and by night.

What is the wind
That I hear calling
By day and by night,
The crying of wind?
When the day darkens,
When dusk grows light,
When the dew is falling?

LITTLE CHILDREN OF THE WIND

I HEAR the little children of the wind
Crying solitary in lonely places:
I have not seen their faces
But I have seen the leaves eddying behind,
The little tremulous leaves of the wind.

DEAD LOVE

FROM THE GAELIC

(*Heard sung by an old woman of the Island of Tiree.*)

It is the grey rock I am,
And the grey rain on the rock:
It is the grey wave . . .
That grey hound.

What (is it) to be old:
(It is to be as) the grey moss in winter:
Alasdair-mo-ghaol,
It is long since my laughter.

Alasdair-mo-ghaol,
The breast is shrivelled
That you said was white
As canna in the wind.

THE MOON-CHILD

A LITTLE lonely child am I
That have not any soul:
God made me as the homeless wave,
That has no goal.

A seal my father was, a seal
That once was man:
My mother loved him tho' he was
'Neath mortal ban.

He took a wave and drownëd her,
She took a wave and lifted him:
And I was born where shadows are
In sea-depths dim.

All through the sunny blue-sweet hours
I swim and glide in waters green:
Never by day the mournful shores
By me are seen.

But when the gloom is on the wave
A shell unto the shore I bring:
And then upon the rocks I sit
And plaintive sing.

I have no playmate but the tide
The seaweed loves with dark brown eyes:
The night-waves have the stars for play,
For me but sighs.

THE LORDS OF SHADOW

WHERE the water whispers 'mid the shadowy rowan-trees
I have heard the Hidden People like the hum of swarming bees:
And when the moon has risen and the brown burn glisters grey
I have seen the Green Host marching in laughing disarray.

Dalua then must sure have blown a sudden magic air
Or with the mystic dew have sealed my eyes from seeing fair:
For the great Lords of Shadow who tread the deeps of night
Are no frail puny folk who move in dread of mortal sight.

For sure Dalua laughed alow, Dalua the fairy Fool,
When with his wildfire eyes he saw me 'neath the rowan-shadowed pool:
His touch can make the chords of life a bitter jangling tune,
The false glows true, the true glows false, beneath his moontide rune.

The laughter of the Hidden Host is terrible to hear,
The Hounds of Death would harry me at lifting of a spear:
Mayhap Dalua made for me the hum of swarming bees
And sealed my eyes with dew beneath the shadowy rowan-trees.

INVOCATION OF PEACE

AFTER THE GAELIC

Deep peace I breathe into you,
O weariness, here:
O ache, here!
Deep peace, a soft white dove to you;
Deep peace, a quiet rain to you;
Deep peace, an ebbing wave to you!
Deep peace, red wind of the east from you;
Deep peace, grey wind of the west to you;
Deep peace, dark wind of the north from you;
Deep peace, blue wind of the south to you!
Deep peace, pure red of the flame to you;
Deep peace, pure white of the moon to you;
Deep peace, pure green of the grass to you;
Deep peace, pure brown of the earth to you;
Deep peace, pure grey of the dew to you,
Deep peace, pure blue of the sky to you!
Deep peace of the running wave to you,
Deep peace of the flowing air to you,
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep peace of the sleeping stones to you!
Deep peace of the Yellow Shepherd to you,
Deep peace of the Wandering Shepherdess to you,
Deep peace of the Flock of Stars to you,
Deep peace from the Son of Peace to you,
Deep peace from the heart of Mary to you,
From Bridget of the Mantle
Deep peace, deep peace!
And with the kindness too of the Haughty Father,
Peace!
In the name of the Three who are One,
And by the will of the King of the Elements,
Peace! Peace!

NAOI MIANNAIN

Miann mna sithe, braon :
Miann Sluagh, gaoth :
Miann fitheach, fuil :
Miann eunarag, an fasaich :
Miann faoileag, faileagan mhara :
Miann Bàrd, fith-cheol-min lhuchd nan trusganan uaine :
Miann fear, gaol bhean :
Miann mna, chlann beag :
Miann anama, ais.

NINE DESIRES

The desire of the fairy women, dew :
The desire of the fairy host, wind :
The desire of the raven, blood :
The desire of the snipe, the wilderness :
The desire of the seamew, the lawns of the sea :
The desire of the poet, the soft low music of the Tribe of the Green Mantles :
The desire of man, the love of woman :
The desire of women, the little clan :
The desire of the soul, wisdom.

FOAM OF THE PAST

THRENODIES AND SONGS

CHANTS AND DIRGES

FOAM OF THE PAST

TO W. B. YEATS

In a small book in a greater, "The Little Book of the Great Enchantment" in *The Book of White Magic (or Wisdom)* . . . the "Leabhran Mhòr Gheasadai-reachd" to give the Gaelic name . . . it is said: "When you have a memory out of darkness, tell to a seer, to a poet, and to a friend, that which you remember: and if the seer say, I see it—and if the poet say, I hear it—and if the friend say, I believe it: then know of a surety that your remembrance is a true remembrance." But if our ancestral memories, or memories of the imagination, or reveries of the imagining mind wandering in a world publicly foregone yet inwardly actual, could become authentic only by a test such as this, then I fear they would indeed be apparent as mere foam, the froth of dream. For where is he who is at once seer and poet and friend? Well, you have the great desire, which is the threshold of vision, and vision itself you have, which is the white enchantment: your words that you compel to a new and subtle music, and the unknown airs in your mind that shepherd those words into the green glens of your imagination, would reveal you as the poet, though not one of your fellows acclaimed

you, or none offered you the mistletoe bough with its old symbolism of wisdom and song: and, finally, I think I may call you friend, for we go one way, the dearer that it is narrow and little trod and leads by the whispering sedge and the wilderness, and meet sometimes on that way, and know that we seek the same Graal, and shall come upon it, beyond that fathomless hollow of green water that lies in the West as our poets say, the "Pool" whose breath is Silence and over which hangs a bow of red flame whitening to its moonwhite core.

So you, perhaps, may say of some of these lines in "From the Hills of Dream" and "Foam of the Past" that they come familiarly to you in other than the sense of mere acquaintance. I think you too have known the dew which falls when Dalua whispers under the shadowy rowan-trees, and have heard the laughter of the Hidden Host, and known, . . . not the fairie folk of later legend, . . . but the perilous passage of the great Lords of Shadow, "who tread the deeps of night." You, too, perhaps, have feared The White Hound and the Red Shepherd: and have known that weariness, too old and deep for words, of which the aged Gaelic woman of the Island of Tiree had dim knowledge when she sang

It is the grey rock I am,
And the grey rain on the rock:
It is the grey wave . . .
That grey hound.

You have heard The Rune of the Winds, the blowing of the four white winds and the three dark winds: perhaps, if you have not seen, or heard, my little Moon-Child, you remember her from long ago, and her loneliness when she sang

I have no playmate but the tide
The seaweed loves with dark brown eyes:
The night-waves have the stars for play,
For me but sighs.

For all poetry is in a sense memory: all art, indeed, is a mnemonic gathering of the innumerable and lost into the found and unique. I am sure that you, too, have seen the rising of the Crimson Moon, and have walked secretly with Midir of the Dew and moon-crown'd Brigid and wave-footed Mánan. For you also the long way that seems brief and the short way that seems long, who can say with Dalua in *The Immortal Hour*

And if I tread the long, continuous way
Within a narrow round, not thinking it long,
And fare a single hour thinking it many days,
I am not first or last of the Immortal Clan
For whom the long ways of the world are brief
And the short ways heavy with unimagined time.

I have listened so long to the music of the three harpers of Fraech, that what I most love now in the cadence and inward breath of song is that which comes across the thorn. You remember them, the three sons of Boinn of the Sidhe, that fair queen: the three harpers of Fraech in the old tale of the *Táin bo Fraich* . . . who had for bard names Tear-Bringer, Smile-Bringer, and Sleep-Bringer: and how it was from the music of Uaithnê, the self-playing harp of the Everlasting One, that these three were named. And I, too, like Befinn, sister of Boinn, am spell-bound in that vision of sorrowful beauty . . . of beauty that comes secretly out of darkness and greyness and the sighing of wind, as the dew upon the

grass and the reed by pale water: and is, for so brief a while: and, as the dew is gathered again swiftly and in silence, is become already a dream, a lost air remembered, a beautiful thing that might have been. For that is what is hidden in the lament of the shennachies of old, when they sang of the loveliness of Befinn fading, like a leaf of May at the cold fires of Samhain, before the great flame of beauty of her son Fraech, "most beautiful of the men of Erin and Albin" . . . because of what she saw in that exceeding beauty, like the blue dusk at the heart of flame. "Beautiful beyond all beauty of youth, he was: but he was not long lived." That is the burden of the song. And what is this deep undertide of longing for that which is beyond wavering reach, for that which is covered up in the secrecies of things immortal, but the longing of Finnavar, daughter of bright Oilill and dark-browed Maeve, for Fraech, the Son of Beauty, though she had never seen him, and loved only by hearsay, and because of the white passion in her heart, and because that inappeasable desire was more great to her than the things of life? Alas, what sorrowful truth lives in that dark saying of Boinn of the Sidhe . . . "Men shall die who have an ear for harmonies."

So that to you, for one, these poems, however rude in form they may sometimes be, will come with that remembrance of the imagination which is the incalculable air of the otherworld of poetry. As you know, most of them have their place in tales of mine coloured with the colour of a lost day and of a beauty that is legend: and must suffer by severance from their context, as pluckt pine-branches lose, if not their native savour, at least the light and gloom of their forest-company and the smooth hand of the

wind. The sound and colour of a barbarous day may well vanish in these broken recalling strains . . . at their best dimly caught even when, for example, "The Death Dance" be read in its due place in "The Laughter of the Queen," apart from which it is perhaps like an air born a thousand years ago on a Gaelic minstrel's clarsach and played anew to-day with curious artifice on a many-noted instrument. One or two at least of these threnodies and chants will have for you the familiar cadence of thought as well as of the familiar fall of words, for they are but adaptations of what long ago were chanted to rude harps made of applewood and yew. The songs of the Swan-Children of Lir have been sung by many poets: Deirdrê's Lament on leaving Scotland, as she and Nathos (Naois) crossed the Irish Sea, has been a music in every generation of the Gael: and I do no more than remember, and repeat, with an accent of atmosphere or thought or words, which, perhaps, just reveals the difference between paraphrase and metaphrase. Like Deirdrê, we, too, look often yearningly to a land from which we were exiled in time, but inhabit in dream and longing, saying with her

Glen of the Roes, Glen of the Roes,
In thee I have dreamed to the full my happy dream:
O that where the shallow bickering Ruel flows
I might hear again, o'er its flashing gleam,
The cuckoos calling by the murmuring stream.

F. M.

FOAM OF THE PAST

I

LEAVES, SHADOWS, AND DREAMS

I HAVE *seen all things pass and all men go*
Under the shadow of the drifting leaf:
Green leaf, red leaf, brown leaf,
Grey leaf blown to and fro,
Blown to and fro.

I have seen happy dreams rise up and pass
Silent and swift as shadows on the grass:
Grey shadows of old dreams,
Grey beauty of old dreams,
Grey shadows in the grass.

THE LAMENT OF IAN THE PROUD

What is this crying that I hear in the wind?
Is it the old sorrow and the old grief?
Or is it a new thing coming, a whirling leaf
About the grey hair of me who am weary and blind?
I know not what it is, but on the moor above the shore
There is a stone which the purple nets of the heather bind,
And thereon is writ: *She will return no more.*
O blown whirling leaf,
And the old grief,
And wind crying to me who am old and blind!

DEIRDRÊ IS DEAD . . .

" Deirdrê the beautiful is dead . . . is dead !"
(The House of Usna)

The grey wind weeps, the grey wind weeps, the grey wind weeps :
Dust on her breast, dust on her eyes, the grey wind weeps !

Cold, cold it is under the brown sod, and cold under the grey grass ;
Here only the wet wind and the flittermice and the plovers pass :

I wonder if the wailing birds, and the soft hair-covered things
Of the air, and the grey wind hear what sighing song she sings

Down in the quiet hollow where the coiled twilights of hair
Are gathered into the darkness that broods on her bosom bare ?

It is said that the dead sing, though we have no ears to hear,
And that whoso lists is lickt up of the Shadow too, because of fear—

But this would give me no fear, that I heard a sighing song from her lips :
No, but as the green heart of an upthrust towering billow slips

FOAM OF THE PAST

Down into the green hollow of the ingathering wave,
So would I slip, and sink, and drown, in her grassy grave.

For is not my desire there, hidden away under the cloudy night
Of her long hair that was my valley of whispers and delight—

And in her two white hands, like still swans on a frozen lake,
Hath she not my heart that I have hidden there for dear love's sake ?

Alas, there is no sighing song, no breath in the silence there :
Not even the white moth that loves death flits through her hair

As the bird of Brigid, made of foam and the pale moonwhite wine
Of dreams, flits under the sombre windless plumes of the pine.

I hear a voice crying, crying, crying : is it the wind
I hear, crying its old weary cry time out of mind ?

The grey wind weeps, the grey wind weeps, the grey wind weeps :
Dust on her breast, dust on her eyes, the grey wind weeps !

HEART O' BEAUTY

O WHERE are thy white hands, Heart o' Beauty?
Heart o' Beauty!
They are as white foam on the swept sands,
Heart o' Beauty!
They are as white swans i' the dusk, thy white hands,
Wild swans in flight over shadowy lands,
Heart o' Beauty!

O lift again thy white hands, Heart o' Beauty,
Heart o' Beauty!
Harp to the white waves on the yellow sands,
Heart o' Beauty!
They will hearken now to these waving wands,
To the magic wands of thy white hands,
Heart o' Beauty!

From the white dawn till the grey dusk,
Heart o' Beauty!
I hear the unseen waves of unseen strands,
Heart o' Beauty!
I see the sun rise and set over shadowy lands,
But never, never, never thy white hands, thy white hands,
Heart o' Beauty!

THE MONODY OF ISLA THE SINGER

"Like Bells on the wind . . ."

Is it time to let the Hour rise and go forth as a hound
loosed from the battle-cars?
Is it time to let the Hour go forth, as the White
Hound with the eyes of flame?
For if it be not time I would have this hour that is
left to me under the stars
Wherein I may dream my dream again, and at the
last whisper one name.

It is the name of one who was more fair than youth
to the old, than life to the young:
She was more fair than the first love of Angus the
Beautiful, and though I were blind
And deaf for a hundred ages I would see her, more
fair than any poet has sung,
And hear her voice like mournful bells crying on the
wind.

WHITE-HANDS

O WHERE in the north, or where in the south, or where in the east or west
Is she who hath the flower-white hands and the swandown breast?
O, if she be west, or east she be, or in the north or south,
A sword will leap, a horse will prance, ere I win to Honey-Mouth.

She has great eyes, like the doe on the hill, and warm and sweet she is,
O, come to me, Honey-Mouth, bend to me, Honey-Mouth, give me thy kiss!

White-Hands her name is, where she reigns amid the princes fair:
White hands she moves like swimming swans athrough her dusk-wave hair:
White hands she puts about my heart, white hands fan up my breath:
White hands take out the heart of me, and grant me life or death!

White hands make better songs than hymns, white hands are young and sweet:
O, a sword for me, O Honey-Mouth, and a war-horse fleet!

O wild sweet eyes! O glad wild eyes! O mouth, how sweet it is!
O, come to me, Honey-Mouth! bend to me, Honey-Mouth! give me thy kiss!

THE DESIRE AND THE LAMENTATION OF COEL

(*The noise of harps and tympans. From the wood comes the loud chanting voice of* Coel):

O, 'tis a good house, and a palace fair, the Dûn of Macha,
And happy with a great household is Macha there:
Druids she has, and bards, minstrels, harpers, knights;
Hosts of servants she has, and wonders beautiful and rare,
But nought so wonderful and sweet as her face queenly fair,
O Macha of the Ruddy Hair!

(*Choric Voices in a loud, swelling chant*):

O Macha of the Ruddy Hair!

(Coel *chants*):

The colour of her great Dûn is the shining whiteness of lime,
And within it are floors strewn with green rushes and couches white;
Soft wondrous silks and blue gold-claspt mantles and furs
Are there, and jewelled golden cups for revelry by night:
Thy grianân of gold and glass is filled with sunshine-light,
O Macha, queen by day, queen by night!

(*Choric Voices*):

O Macha, queen by day, queen by night!

Beyond the green portals, and the brown and red
thatch of wings
Striped orderly, the wings of innumerous stricken
birds,
A wide shining floor reaches from wall to wall,
wondrously carven
Out of a sheet of silver, whereon are graven swords
Intricately ablaze : mistress of many hoards
Art thou, Macha of few words !

(*Choric Voices*) :

O Macha of few words !

Fair indeed is thy couch, but fairer still is thy throne,
A chair it is, all of a blaze of wonderful yellow gold :
There thou sittest, and watchest the women going
to and fro,
Each in garments fair and with long locks twisted
fold in fold :
With the joy that is in thy house men would not
grow old,
O Macha, proud, austere, cold.

(*Choric Voices*) :

O Macha, proud, austere, cold !

Of a surety there is much joy to be had of thee and
thine,
There in the song-sweet sunlit bowers in that place ;
Wounded men might sink in sleep and be well
content
So to sleep, and to dream perchance, and know no
other grace

Than to wake and look betimes on thy proud queenly face,
O Macha of the Proud Face!

(*Choric Voices*):

O Macha of the Proud Face!

And if there be any here who wish to know more of this wonder,
Go, you will find all as I have shown, as I have said:
From beneath its portico, thatched with wings of birds blue and yellow
Reaches a green lawn, where a fount is fed
From crystal and gems: of crystal and gold each bed
In the house of Macha of the Ruddy Head!

(*Choric Voices*):

In the house of Macha of the Ruddy Head!

In that great house where Macha the queen has her pleasaunce
There is everything in the whole world that a man might desire.
God is my witness that if I say little it is for this,
That I am grown faint with wonder, and can no more admire,
But say this only, that I live and die in the fire
Of thine eyes, O Macha, my desire,
With thine eyes of fire!

(*Choric Voices in a loud swelling chant*):

But say this only, that we live and die in the fire
Of thine eyes, O Macha, Dream, Desire,
With thine eyes of fire!

(*Choric Voices repeat their refrains, but fainter, and becoming more faint. Last vanishing sound of the harps and tympans.*)

(*The Voice of* Coel):

And where now is Macha of the proud face and the ruddy hair,
Macha of few words, proud, austere, cold, with the eyes of fire?
Is she calling to the singers down there under the grass,
Is she saying to the bard, sing: and to the minstrel, where is thy lyre?
Or is that her voice that I hear, lonelier and further and higher
Than the wild wailing wind on the moor that echoes my desire,
O Macha of the proud face
And the eyes of fire!

THE SORROW OF THE HOUSE OF LIR

Happy our father Lir afar,
With mead, and songs of love and war:
The salt brine, and the white foam,
With these his children have their home.

In the sweet days of long ago
Soft-clad we wandered to and fro:
But now cold winds of dawn and night
Pierce deep our feathers thin and light.

The hazel mead in cups of gold
We feasted from in days of old:
The sea-weed now our food, our wine
The salt, keen, bitter, barren brine.

On soft warm couches once we pressed:
White harpers lulled us to our rest:
Our beds are now where the sea raves,
Our lullaby the clash of waves.

Alas! the fair sweet days are gone
When love was ours from dawn to dawn:
Our sole companion now is pain,
Through frost and snow, through storm and rain.

Beneath my wings my brothers lie
When the fierce ice-winds hurtle by:
On either side and 'neath my breast
Lir's sons have known no other rest.

Ah, kisses we shall no more know,
Ah, love so dear exchanged for woe,
All that is sweet for us is o'er,
Homeless we are from shore to shore.

THE CHANT OF ARDEN THE PICT

O Colum and monks of Christ
It is peace we are having this night:
Sure, peace is a good thing,
And I am glad with the gladness.

We worship one God,
Though ye call him Dè—
And I say not, O Dia!
But cry Bea'uil!

For it is one faith for man,
And one for the living world,
And no man is wiser than another—
And none knoweth much.

None knoweth a better thing than this:
The Sword, Love, Song, Honour, Sleep.
None knoweth a surer thing than this:
Birth, Sorrow, Pain, Weariness, Death.

THE LAMENTATION OF BALVA THE MONK

Balva the old monk I am called: when I was young,
Balva Honeymouth.
That was before Colum the White came to Iona in
the West.
She whom I loved was a woman whom I won out of
the South,
And I had a good heaven with my lips on hers and
with breast to breast.

Balva the old monk I am called: were it not for the
fear
That the soul of Colum the White would meet my
soul in the Narrows
That sever the living and dead, I would rise up from
here
And go back to where men pray with spears and
arrows.

Balva the old monk I am called: ugh! ugh! the
cold bell of the matins—'tis dawn!
Sure it's a dream I have had that I was in a warm
wood with the sun ashine,
And that against me in the pleasant greenness was
a soft fawn,
And a voice that whispered "Balva Honeymouth,
drink, I am thy wine!"

THE LAST NIGHT OF ARTÂN THE CULDEE

It is but a little thing to sit here in the silence and the dark:
For I remember the blazing noon when I saw Oona the White:
I remember the day when we sailed the Moyle in our skin-built barque;
And I remember when Oona's lips were on mine in the heart of the night.

So it is a little thing to sit here, hearing nought, seeing nought:
When the dawn breaks they will hurry me hence to the new-dug grave:
It will be quiet there, if it be true what the good Colum has taught,
And I shall hear Oona's voice as a sleeping seal hears the moving wave.

OONA OF THE DARK EYES AND THE CRYING OF WIND

I HAVE fared far in the dim woods:
And I have known sorrow and grief,
And the incalculable years
That haunt the solitudes.
Where now are the multitudes
Of the Field of Spears?
Old tears
Fall upon them as rain,
Their eyes are quiet under the brown leaf.

I have seen the dead, innumerous:
I too shall lie thus,
And thou, Congal, thou too shalt lie
Still and white
Under the starry sky,
And rise no more to any Field of Spears,
But, under the brown leaf,
Remember grief
And the old, salt, bitter tears.

And I have heard the crying of wind.
It is the crying that is in my heart:
Oona of the Dark Eyes, Oona of the Dark Eyes,
Oona, Oona, Oona, Heart of my Heart!
But there is only crying of wind
Through the silences of the sky,
Dews that fall and rise,
The faring of long years,
And the coverlet of the brown leaf
For the old familiar grief
And the old tears.

THE LOVE-SONG OF DROSTAN

(*From "Drostan and Yseul": an unpublished drama.*)

DROSTAN: *You have drunken of the cup of wisdom. Let me also drink.*

[*Suddenly snatches a small clarsach from the woman's hand, and to its wild and rude music chants—*

In the days of the Great Fires when the hills were aflame,
Aed the Shining God lay by a foamwhite mountain,
The white thigh of moon-crown'd Dana, Beautiful Mother.
And the wind fretted the blue with the tossed curling clouds
Of her tangled hair, and like two flaming stars were her eyes
Torches of sunfire and moonfire: and her vast breasts
Heaved as the sea heaves in the white calms, and the wind of her sighs
Were as the winds of sunrise soaring the peaks of the eagles—
Dana, Mother of the Gods, moon-crown'd, sea-shod, wonderful!

"Fire of my love," she cried. . . . Aed of the Sunlight and Shadow
Laughed: and he rose till he grew more vast than Dana:
The sun was his trampling foot, and he wore the moon as a feather:

And he lay by Dana: and the world swayed, and the stars swung.
Thus was Oengus born, Lord of Love, Son of Wisdom and Death.

Hear us, Oengus, Beautiful, Terrible, Sun-Lord and Death-Lord!
Give us the white flame of love born of Aed and of Dana—
Hearken, thou Pulse of hearts, and let the white doves from your lips
Cover with passionate wings the silence between us,
Where a white fawn leaps and only Yseul and I behold it.

THE CUP

Chuir Muiril mirr ann,
Chuir Uiril mil ann,
Chuir Muirinn fion ann,
'S chuir Michal ann buadh.

"Muriel placed myrrh in it:
Uriel placed honey in it:
Murien placed wine in it:
And Michael strength."

THE Cup of bitter-sweet I know
That with old wine of love doth glow:
The dew of tears to it doth go,
And wisdom is its hidden woe.

Were I but young again to throw
This cup where the wild thistles grow,
Or where, oblivious, ceaseless, slow,
The grey tumultuous waters flow!

THE LOVE-CHANT OF CORMAC CONLINGAS

Oimé, Oimé, woman of the white breasts, Eilidh![1]
Woman of the golden hair, and lips of the red, red rowan!
Oimé, O-rì, Oimé!

Where is the swan that is whiter, with breast more smooth,
Or the wave on the sea that moves as thou movest, Eilidh—
Oimé, a-rò; Oimé, a-rò!

It is the marrow in my bones that is aching, aching, Eilidh:
It is the blood in my body that is a bitter wild tide, Oimé!
O-rì, Ohion, O-rì, aròne!

Is it the heart of thee calling that I am hearing, Eilidh,
Or the wind in the wood, or the beating of the sea, Eilidh,
Or the beating of the sea?

Shule, shule agràh, shule agràh, shule agràh, Shule!
Heart of me, move to me! move to me, heart of me, Eilidh, Eilidh,
Move to me!

Ah! let the wild hawk take it, the name of me, Cormac Conlingas,
Take it and tear at thy heart with it, heart that of old was so hot with it,
Eilidh, Eilidh, O-rì, Eilidh, Eilidh!

[1] Eilidh is pronounced Eily.

THE DEATH-DIRGE FOR CATHAL

Out of the wild hills I am hearing a voice, O Cathal!
And I am thinking it is the voice of a bleeding sword.
Whose is that sword? I know it well: it is the sword of the Slayer—
Him that is called Death, and the song that it sings I know:—
O where is Cathal mac Art, the white cup for the thirst of my lips?

Out of the cold greyness of the sea I am hearing, O Cathal,
I am hearing a wave-muffled voice, as of one who drowns in the depths:
Whose is that voice? I know it well: it is the voice of the Shadow—
Her that is called the Grave, and the song that she sings I know:—
O where is Cathal mac Art, that has warmth for the chill that I have?

Out of the hot greenness of the wood I am hearing, O Cathal,
I am hearing a rustling step, as of one stumbling blind.
Whose is that rustling step? I know it well: the rustling walk of the Blind One—
Her that is called Silence, and the song that she sings I know:—
O where is Cathal mac Art, that has tears to water my stillness?

THE DEATH DANCE

O ARONE a-ree, eily arone, arone!
'Tis a good thing to be sailing across the seas!
How the women smile and the children are laughing glad
When the galleys go out into the blue sea—arone!
O eily arone, arone!

But the children may laugh less when the wolves come,
And the women may smile less in the winter-cold—
For the Summer-sailors will not come again, arone!
O arone a-ree, eily arone, arone!

I am thinking they will not sail back again, O no!
The yellow-haired men that came sailing across the sea:
For 'tis wild apples they would be, and swing on green branches,
And sway in the wind for the corbies to preen their eyne,
O eily arone, eily a-ree!

And it is pleasure for Scathach the Queen to see this:
To see the good fruit that grows on the Tree of the Stones:
Long black fruit it is, wind-swayed by its yellow roots,
And like men they are with their feet dancing in the void air!
O, O, arone, a-ree, eily arone!

O arone a-ree, eily arone, arone,
O, O, arone, a-ree, eily arone!

THE END OF AODH-OF-THE-SONGS

The swift years slip and slide adown the steep;
The slow years pass; neither will come again.
Yon huddled years have weary eyes that weep,
These laugh, these moan, these silent frown, these plain,
These have their lips curl'd up with proud disdain.

O years with tears, and tears through weary years,
How weary I who in your arms have lain:
Now, I am tired: the sound of slipping spears
Moves soft, and tears fall in a bloody rain,
And the chill footless years go over me who am slain.

I hear, as in a wood, dim with old light, the rain,
Slow falling; old, old, weary, human tears:
And in the deepening dark my comfort is my Pain,
Sole comfort left of all my hopes and fears,
Pain that alone survives, gaunt hound of the shadowy years.

THE LAMENT OF DARTHOOL

Ionmhuin tir, an tir ud shoir—
Alba go na h'-iongantaibh ;
Nocha ttiocfainn aiste ale,
Muna ttagainn le Naoise.

O woods of Oona, I can hear the singing
Of the west wind among the branches green
And the leaping and laughing of cool waters springing,
And my heart aches for all that has been,
For all that has been, my Home, all that has been !

Glenmassan ! O Glenmassan !
High the sorrel there, and the sweet fragrant grasses :
It would be well if I were listening now to where
In Glenmassan the sun shines and the cool west wind passes,
Glenmassan of the grasses !

Lock Etive, O fair Loch Etive, that was my first home,
I think of thee now when on the grey-green sea—
And beneath the mist in my eyes and the flying foam
I look back wearily,
I look back wearily to thee !

Glen Orchy, O Glen Orchy, fair sweet glen,
Was ever I more happy than in thy shade ?
Was not Nathos there the happiest of men ?
O may thy beauty never fade,
Most fair and sweet and beautiful glade.

Glen of the Roes, Glen of the Roes,
In thee I have dreamed to the full my happy dream:
O that where the shallow bickering Ruel flows,
I might hear again, o'er its flashing gleam,
The cuckoos calling by the murmuring stream.

THE LOVE-KISS OF DERMID AND GRAINNE

When by the twilit sea these twain were come
Dermid spake no one word, Grainne was dumb,
And in the hearts of both deep silence was.
"Sorrow upon me, love," whispered the grass;
"Sorrow upon me, love," the sea-bird cried;
"Sorrow upon me, love," the lapsed wave sighed.

"For what the King has willed, that thing must be,
O Dermid! As two waves upon this sea
Wind-swept we are,—the wind of his dark mind,
With fierce inevitable tides behind."
"What would you have, O Grainne: he is King."
"I would we were the birds that come with Spring,
The purple-feathered birds that have no home,
The birds that love, then fly across the foam."

"Give me thy mouth, O Dermid," Grainne said
Thereafter, and whispering thus she leaned her head—
Ah, supple, subtle snake she glided there
Till, on his breast, a kiss-deep was her hair
That twisted serpent-wise in gold-red pain
From where his lips held high their proud disdain.
"Here, here," she whispered low, "here on my mouth
The swallow, Love, hath found his haunted South."

Then Dermid stooped and passionlessly kissed.
But therewith Grainne won what she had missed,
And that night was to her, and all sweet nights
Thereafter, as Love's flaming swallow-flights
Of passionate passion beyond speech to tell.
But Dermid knew how vain was any spell

Against the wrath of Finn : and Grainne's breath
To him was ever chill with Grainne's death ;
Full well he knew that in a soundless place
His own wraith stood and with a moon-white face
Watched its own shadow laugh and shake its spear
Far in a phantom dell against a phantom deer.

THE TRYST OF QUEEN HYNDE

Queen Hynde was in the rowan-wood with scarlet fruit aflame,
Her face was as the berries were, one sun-hot wave of shame.

With scythes of fire the August sun mowed down vast swathes of shade:
With blazing eyes the waiting queen stared on her steel-blue blade.

"What, thirsty hound," she muttered low, "with thirst you flash and gleam:
Bide, bide a wee, my bonnie hound, I'll show ye soon a stream!"

The sun had tossed against the West his broken scythes of fire
When Lord Gillanders bowed before his Queen and Sweet Desire.

She did not give him smile or kiss; her hand she did not give:
"But are ye come for death," she said, "or are ye come to live?"

Gillanders reined and looked at her: "Hynde, Queen and Love," he said,
"I wooed in love, I come in love, to this the tryst we made:

"Why are your eyes so fierce and wild? why is your face so white?
I love you with all my love," he said, "by day and by night."

"What o' the word that's come to me, of how my lord's to wed
The lilywhite maid o' one that has a gold crown on his head?

"What o' the word that yesternight ye wantoned with my name,
And on a windy scorn let loose the blown leaf o' my shame?"

The Lord Gillanders looked at her, and never a word said he,
But sprang from off his great black horse and sank upon his knee.

"This is my love," said white Queen Hynde, "and this, and this, and this"—
Four times she stabbed him to the heart while she his lips did kiss.

She left him in the darkling wood: and as she rode she sang
(The little notes swirled in and out amid the horse-hoof clang)

My love was sweet, was sweet, was sweet, but not so sweet as now!
A deep long sleep my sweet love has beneath the rowan-bough.

They let her in, they lifted swords, his head each one did bare:
Slowly she bowed, slowly she passed, slowly she clomb the stair:

Her little son she lifted up, and whispered 'neath his cries—
"The old king's son, they say; mayhap; he has Gillander's eyes."

THE SONG OF AHÈZ THE PALE

But this was in the old, old, far-off days,
But this was in the old, old, far-off days.

They rode beneath the ancient boughs, and as they rode she sang,
But at the last both silent were: only the horse-hoofs rang.

Guenn took up his sword, and she felt its shining blade,
And she laughed and vowed it fitted ill for the handling of a maid.

He looked at her, and darkly smiled, and said she was a queen:
For she could swing the white sword high and love its dazzling sheen.

She lifted up the great white sword and swung it o'er his head—
"Ah, you may smile, my lord, now you may smile," she said.

For this was in the old, old, far-off days,
For this was in the old, old, far-off days.

THE WAR-SONG OF THE VIKINGS

Let loose the hounds of war,
  The whirling swords!
Send them leaping afar,
Red in their thirst for war;
Odin laughs in his car
  At the screaming of the swords!

Far let the white-ones fly,
  The whirling swords!
Afar off the ravens spy
Death-shadows cloud the sky.
Let the wolves of the Gael die
  'Neath the screaming swords!

The Shining Ones yonder
  High in Valhalla
Shout now, with thunder:
Drive the Gaels under,
Cleave them asunder—
  Swords of Valhalla!

THE CRIMSON MOON

Behind the Legions of the Sun, the Star Battalions
of the night,
The reddening of the West I see, from morn till
dusk, from dusk till light.
A day must surely come at last, and that day soon,
When the Hidden People shall march out beneath
the Crimson Moon.

Our palaces shall crumble then, our towers shall fall
away,
And on the plains our burning towns shall flaunt a
desolate day:
The cities of our pride shall wear tiaras of red flame,
And all our phantom glory be an idle wind-blown
name.

What shall our vaunt be on that day, or who thereon
shall hear
The laughter of our laughing lips become the wail of
fear?
Our vaunt shall be the windy dust in eddies far and
wide,
The hearing, theirs who follow us with swift and
dreadful stride.

A cry of lamentation, then, shall sweep from land to
land:
A myriad wavering hands shall shake above a myriad
strand:
The Day shall swoon before a Shade of vast ancestral
Night,
Till a more dreadful Morn awake to flood and spume
of light.

FOAM OF THE PAST

This is the prophecy of old, before the roaming tribes
of Man
Spread Multitude athwart the heirdom of an earlier
Clan—
Before the gods drank Silence, and hid their way
with cloud,
And Man uprose and claimed the Earth and all the
starry crowd.

So Man conceived and made his dream, till at the last
he smiled to see
Its radiant skirts brush back the stars from Immor-
tality:
He crowned himself with the Infinite, and gave his
Soul a Home,
And then the quiet gods awoke and blew his life to
foam.

This is the Dream I see anew, when all the West is
red with light,
Behind the Legions of the Sun, the Star Battalions
of the night.
Verily the day may come at last, and that day soon,
When the Hidden People shall march out beneath
the Crimson Moon.

THE MOURNERS

(FROM THE BRETON)

When they had made the cradle
  Of ivory and of gold,
Their hearts were heavy still
  With the sorrow of old.

And ever as they rocked, the tears
  Ran down, sad tears:
Who is it lieth dead therein,
  Dead all these weary years?

And still they rock that cradle there
  Of ivory and of gold:
For in their minds the shadow is
  The Shadow of Old.

They weep, and know not what they weep;
  They wait a vain re-birth:
Vanity of vanities, alas,
    For there is but one birth
    On the wide green earth.

II

MILKING SIAN

Give up thy milk to her who calls
Across the low green hills of Heaven
And stream-cool meads of Paradise!

Across the low green hills of Heaven
How sweet to hear the milking call,
The milking call i' the meads of Heaven:

Stream-cool the meads of Paradise,
Across the low green hills of Heaven.

Give up thy milk to her who calls,
Sweet voiced amid the Starry Seven.
Give up thy milk to her who calls!

THE KYE-SONG OF ST. BRIDE

O SWEET St. Bride of the
Yellow, yellow hair:
Paul said, and Peter said,
And all the saints alive or dead
Vowed she had the sweetest head,
Bonnie, sweet St. Bride of the
Yellow, yellow hair.

White may my milking be,
White as thee:
Thy face is white, thy neck is white,
Thy hands are white, thy feet are white,
For thy sweet soul is shining bright—
O dear to me,
O dear to see
St. Bridget white!

Yellow may my butter be,
Firm, and round:
Thy breasts are sweet,
Firm, round and sweet,
So may my butter be:
So may my butter be O
Bridget sweet!

Safe thy way is, safe, O
Safe, St. Bride:
May my kye come home at even,
None be fallin', none be leavin',
Dusky even, breath-sweet even,

Here, as there, where O
    St. Bride thou
Keepest tryst with God in heav'n,
Seest the angels bow
And souls be shriven—
Here, as there, 'tis breath-sweet even
    Far and wide—
Singeth thy little maid
Safe in thy shade
    Bridget, Bride!

ST. BRIDE'S LULLABY

Oh, Baby Christ, so dear to me,
Sang Bridget Bride:
How sweet thou art,
My baby dear,
Heart of my heart!

Heavy her body was with thee,
Mary, beloved of One in Three,
Sang Bridget Bride—
Mary, who bore thee, little lad:
But light her heart was, light and glad
With God's love clad.

Sit on my knee,
Sang Bridget Bride:
Sit here
O Baby dear,
Close to my heart, my heart:
For I thy foster-mother am,
My helpless lamb!
O have no fear,
Sang good St. Bride.

None, none,
No fear have I:
So let me cling
Close to thy side
While thou dost sing,
O Bridget Bride!

My Lord, my Prince, I sing:
My Baby dear, my King!
Sang Bridget Bride.

THE BIRD OF CHRIST

Holy, Holy, Holy,
  Christ upon the Cross:
My little nest was near,
  Hidden in the moss.

Holy, Holy, Holy,
  Christ was pale and wan:
His eyes beheld me singing
  Bron, Bron, mo Bron![1]

Holy, Holy Holy,
  "Come near, O wee brown bird!"
Christ spake, and lo, I lighted
  Upon the Living Word.

Holy, Holy, Holy,
  I heard the mocking scorn!
But Holy, Holy, Holy,
  I sang against a thorn!

Holy, Holy, Holy,
  Ah, his brow was bloody:
Holy, Holy, Holy,
  All my breast was ruddy.

Holy, Holy, Holy,
  Christ's-Bird shalt thou be:
Thus said Mary Virgin
  There on Calvary.

[1] "O my Grief, my Grief!"

Holy, Holy, Holy,
A wee brown bird am I:
But my breast is ruddy
For I saw Christ die.

Holy, Holy, Holy,
By this ruddy feather,
Colum, call thy monks, and
All the birds together.

ST. CHRISTOPHER OF THE GAEL

Behind the wattle-woven house
Nial the Mighty gently crept
From out a screen of ashtree boughs
To where a captive whiterobe slept.

Lightly he moved, as though ashamed;
To right and left he glanced his fears.
Nial the Mighty was he named
Though but an untried youth in years—

But tall he was, as tall as he,
White Dermid of the magic sword,
Or Torcall of the Hebrid Sea
Or great Cuhoolin of the Ford;

Strong as the strongest, too, he was:
As Balor of the Evil Eye;
As Fionn who kept the Ulster Pass
From dawn till blood-flusht sunset sky.

Much had he pondered all that day
The mystery of the men who died
On crosses raised along the way,
And perished singing side by side.

Modred the chief had sailed the Moyle,
Had reached Iona's guardless-shore,
Had seized the monks when at their toil
And carried northward, bound, a score.

Some he had thrust into the deep,
To see if magic fins would rise:
Some from high rocks he forced to leap,
To see wings fall from out the skies:

Some he had pinned upon tall spears,
Some tossed on shields with brazen clang,
To see if through their blood and tears
Their god would hear the hymns they sang.

But when his oarsmen flung their oars,
And laughed to see across the foam
The glimmer of the highland shores
And smoke-wreaths of the hidden home,

Modred was weary of his sport.
All day he brooded as he strode
Betwixt the reef-encircled port
And the oak-grove of the Sacred Road.

At night he bade his warriors raise
Seven crosses where the foamswept strand
Lay still and white beyond the blaze
Of the hundred camp-fires of the land.

The women milked the late-come kye,
The children raced in laughing glee ;
Like sheep from out the fold of the sky
Stars leapt and stared at earth and sea.

At times a wild and plaintive air
Made delicate music far away :
A hill-fox barked before its lair :
The white owl hawked its shadowy prey.

But at the rising of the moon
The druids came from grove and glen,
And to the chanting of a rune
Crucified St. Columba's men.

They died in silence side by side,
But first they sang the evening hymn:
By midnight all but one had died,
At dawn he too was grey and grim.

One monk alone had Modred kept,
A youth with hair of golden-red,
Who never once had sighed or wept,
Not once had bowed his proud young head.

Broken he lay, and bound with thongs.
Thus had he seen his brothers toss
Like crows transfixed upon great prongs,
Till death crept up each silent cross.

Night grew to dawn, to scarlet morn;
Day waned to firelit, starlit night:
But still with eyes of passionate scorn
He dared the worst of Modred's might.

When from the wattle-woven house
Nial the Mighty softly stepped,
And peered beneath the ashtree boughs
To where he thought the whiterobe slept,

He heard the monk's words rise in prayer,
He heard a hymn's ascending breath—
"Christ, Son of God, to Thee I fare
This night upon the wings of death."

Nial the Mighty crossed the space,
He waited till the monk had ceased;
Then, leaning o'er the foam-white face,
He stared upon the dauntless priest.

"Speak low," he said, "and tell me this:
Who is the king you hold so great?—
Your eyes are dauntless flames of bliss
Though Modred taunts you with his hate:—

"This god or king, is He more strong
Than Modred is? And does He sleep
That thus your death-in-life is long,
And bonds your aching body keep?"

The monk's eyes stared in Nial's eyes:
"Young giant with a child's white heart,
I see a cross take shape and rise,
And thou upon it nailèd art!"

Nial looked back: no cross he saw
Looming from out the dreadful night:
Yet all his soul was filled with awe,
A thundercloud with heart of light.

"Tell me thy name," he said, "and why
Thou waitest thus the druid knife,
And carest not to live or die?
Monk, hast thou little care of life?"

"Great care of that I have," he said,
And looked at Nial with eyes of fire:
"My life begins when I am dead,
There only is my heart's desire."

Nial the mighty sighed. "Thy words
Are as the idle froth of foam,
Or clashing of triumphant swords
When Modred brings the foray home.

"My name is Nial: Nial the Strong:
A lad in years, but as you see
More great than heroes of old song
Or any lordly men that be.

"To Modred have I come from far,
O'er many a hill and strath and stream,
To be a mighty sword in war,
And this because I dreamed a dream:

"My dream was that my strength so great
Should serve the greatest king there is:
Modred the Pict thus all men rate,
And so I sought his far-off Liss.

"But if there be a greater yet,
A king or god whom he doth fear,
My service he shall no more get,
My strength shall rust no longer here.

The monk's face gladdened. "Go, now, go:
To Modred go: he sitteth dumb,
And broods on what he fain would know:
And say, '*O King, the Cross is come!*'

"Then shall the king arise in wrath,
And bid you go from out his sight,
For if he meet you on his path
He'll leave you stark and still and white.

"Thus shall he show, great king and all,
He fears the glorious Cross of Christ,
And dreads to hear slain voices call
For vengeance on the sacrificed.

"But, Nial, come not here again:
Long before dawn my soul shall be
Beyond the reach of any pain
That Modred dreams to prove on me.

"Go forth thyself at dawn, and say
'This is Christ's holy natal morn,
My king is He from forth this day
When He to save mankind was born':

"Go forth and seek a lonely place
Where a great river fills the wild;
There bide, and let thy strength be grace,
And wait the Coming of a Child.

"A wondrous thing shall then befall:
And when thou seek'st if it be true,
Green leaves along thy staff shall crawl,
With flowers of every lovely hue."

The monk's face whitened, like sea-foam:
Seaward he stared, and sighed "I go—
Farewell—my Lord Christ calls me home!"
Nial stooped and saw death's final throe.

An hour before the dawn he rose
And sought out Modred, brooding, dumb;
"O King," he said, "my bond I close,
King Christ I seek: the Cross is come!"

Swift as a stag's leap from a height
King Modred drew his dreadful sword:
Then as a snow-wraith, silent, white,
He stared and passed without a word.

Before the flush of dawn was red
A druid came to Nial the Great:
"The doom of death hath Modred said,
Yet fears this Christ's mysterious hate:

"So get you hence, you giant-thewed man:
Go your own way: come not again:
No more are you of Modred's clan:
Go now, forthwith, lest you be slain."

Nial went forth with gladsome face;
No more of Modred's clan he was:
"Now, now," he cried, "Christ's trail I'll trace,
And nowhere turn, and nowhere pause."

He laughed to think how Modred feared
The wrath of Christ, the monk's white king:
"A greater than Modred hath appeared,
To Him my sword and strength I bring."

All day, all night, he walked afar:
He saw the moon rise white and still:
The evening and the morning star:
The sunrise burn upon the hill.

He heard the moaning of the seas,
The vast sigh of the sunswept plain,
The myriad surge of forest-trees;
Saw dusk and night return again.

At falling of the dusk he stood
Upon a wild and desert land:
Dark fruit he gathered for his food,
Drank water from his hollowed hand,

Cut from an ash a mighty bough
And trimmed and shaped it to the half:
"Safe in the desert am I now,
With sword," he said, "and with this staff."

The stars came out: Arcturus hung
His ice-blue fire far down the sky:
The Great Bear through the darkness swung:
The Seven Watchers rose on high.

A great moon flooded all the west.
Silence came out of earth and sea
And lay upon the husht world's breast,
And breathed mysteriously.

Three hours Nial walked, three hours and more:
Then halted when beyond the plain
He stood upon that river's shore
The dying monk had bid him gain.

A little house he saw: clay-wrought,
Of wattle woven through and through:
Then, all his weariness forgot,
The joy of drowning-sleep he knew.

Three hours he slept, and then he heard
A voice—and yet a voice so low
It might have been a dreaming bird
Safe-nested by the rushing flow.

Almost he slept once more: then, *Hush!*
Once more he heard above the noise
And tempest of the river's rush
The thin faint words of a child's voice.

"Good Sir, awake from sleep and dream,
Good Sir, come out and carry me
Across this dark and raging stream
Till safe on the other side I be."

Great Nial shivered on his bed:
"No human creature calls this night,
It is a wild fetch of the dead,"
He thought, and shrunk, and shook with fright.

Once more he heard that infant-cry:
"Come out, Good Sir, or else I drown—
Come out, Good Sir, or else I die
And you, too, lose a golden crown."

"A golden crown"—so Nial thought—
"No—no—not thus shall I be ta'en!
Keep, ghost-of-the-night, your crown gold-wrought—
Of sleep and peace I am full fain!"

Once more the windy dark was filled
With lonely cry, with sobbing plaint:
Nial's heart grew sore, its fear was stilled,
King Christ, he knew, would scorn him faint.

"Up, up thou coward, thou sluggard, thou,"
He cried, and sprang from off his bed—
"No crown thou seekest for thy brow,
But help for one in pain and dread!"

Out in the wide and lonely dark
No fetch he saw, no shape, no child:
Almost he turned again—but *hark!*
A song rose o'er the waters wild:

A king am I
Tho' a little Child,
Son of God am I,
Meek and mild,
Beautiful
Because God hath said
Let my cup be full
Of wine and bread.

Come to me
Shaken heart,
Shaken heart!
I will not flee.
My heart
Is thy heart
O shaken heart!
Stoop to my Cup,
Sup,
Drink of the wine:
The wine and the bread,
Saith God,
Are mine—
My Flesh and my Blood!

Throw thy sword in the flood:
Come, shaken heart:
Fearful thou art!
Have no more fear—
Lo, I am here,
The little One,
The Son,
Thy Lord and thy King.

It is I who sing:
Christ, your King . . .

Be not afraid :
Look, I am Light,
A great star
Seen from afar
In the darkness of night :
I am Light,
Be not afraid . . .
Wade, wade
Into the deep flood !
Think of the Bread,
The Wine and the Bread
That are my Flesh and Blood.
Cross, cross the Flood,
Sure is the goal . . .
Be not afraid
O Soul,
Be not afraid !

Nial's heart was filled with joy and pain :
" This is my king, my king indeed :
To think that drown'd in sleep I've lain
When Christ the Child-God crieth in need!"

Swift from his wattled hut he strode,
Stumbling among the grass and bent,
And, seeking where the river flowed,
Far o'er the dark flood peered and leant :

Then suddenly beside him saw
A little Child all clad in white :
He bowed his head in love and awe,
Then lifted high his burthen light.

High on his shoulders sat the Child,
While with strong limbs he fared among
The rushing waters black and wild
And where the fiercest currents swung.

The waters rose more high, more high,
Higher and higher every yard . . .
Nial stumbled on with sob and sigh,
Christ heard him panting sore and hard.

"O Child," Nial cried, "forbear, forbear!
Hark you not how these waters whirled!
The weight of all the earth I bear,
The weary weight of all the world!"

"*Christopher!*" . . . low above the noise,
The rush, the darkness, Nial heard
The far-off music of a Voice
That said all things in saying one word—

"*Christopher . . . this thy name shall be!*
Christ-bearer is thy name, even so
Because of service done to me
Heavy with weight of the world's woe."

With breaking sobs, with panting breath
Christopher grasped a bent-held dune,
Then with flung staff and as in death
Forward he fell in a heavy swoon.

All night he lay in silence there,
But safe from reach of surging tide:
White angels had him in their care,
Christ healed and watched him side by side.

FOAM OF THE PAST

When all the silver wings of dawn
Had waved above the rose-flusht east,
Christopher woke . . . his dream was gone.
The angelic songs had ceased.

Was it a dream in very deed,
He wondered, broken, trembling, dazed?
His staff he lifted from the mead
And as an upright sapling raised.

Lo, it was as the monk had said—
If he would prove the vision true,
His staff would blossom to its head
With flowers of every lovely hue.

Christopher bowed: before his eyes
Christ's love fulfilled the holy hour . . .
A south-wind blew, green leaves did rise
And the staff bloomed a myriad flower!

Christopher bowed in holy prayer,
While Christ's love fell like healing dew:
God's father-hand was on him there:
The peace of perfect peace he knew.

THE CROSS OF THE DUMB

A CHRISTMAS ON IONA, LONG, LONG AGO

ONE eve, when St. Columba strode
In solemn mood along the shore,
He met an angel on the road
Who but a poor man's semblance bore.

He wondered much, the holy saint,
What stranger sought the lonely isle,
But seeing him weary and wan and faint
St. Colum hailed him with a smile.

"Remote our lone Iona lies
Here in the grey and windswept sea,
And few are they whom my old eyes
Behold as pilgrims bowing the knee. . . .

"But welcome . . . welcome . . . stranger-guest,
And come with me and you shall find
A warm and deer-skinn'd cell for rest
And at our board a welcome kind. . . .

"Yet tell me ere the dune we cross
How came you to this lonely land?
No curraghs in the tideway toss
And none is beached upon the strand!"

The weary pilgrim raised his head
And looked and smiled and said, "From far,
My wandering feet have here been led
By the glory of a shining star. . . ."

St. Colum gravely bowed, and said,
"Enough, my friend, I ask no more;
Doubtless some silence-vow was laid
Upon thee, ere thou sought'st this shore:

"Now, come: and doff this raiment sad
And those rough sandals from thy feet:
The holy brethren will be glad
To haven thee in our retreat."

Together past the praying cells
And past the wattle-woven dome
Whence rang the tremulous vesper bells
St. Colum brought the stranger home.

From thyme-sweet pastures grey with dews
The milch-cows came with swinging tails:
And whirling high the wailing mews
Screamed o'er the brothers at their pails.

A single spire of smoke arose,
And hung, a phantom, in the cold:
Three younger monks set forth to close
The ewes and lambs within the fold.

The purple twilight stole above
The grey-green dunes, the furrowed leas:
And Dusk, with breast as of a dove,
Brooded: and everywhere was peace.

Within the low refectory sate
The little clan of holy folk:
Then, while the brothers mused and ate,
The wayfarer arose and spoke. . . .

"O Colum of Iona-Isle,
And ye who dwell in God's quiet place,
Before I crossed your narrow kyle
I looked in Heaven upon Christ's face."

Thereat St. Colum's startled glance
Swept o'er the man so poorly clad,
And all the brethren looked askance
In fear the pilgrim-guest was mad.

"And, Colum of God's Church i' the sea
And all ye Brothers of the Rood,
The Lord Christ gave a dream to me
And bade me bring it ye as food.

"Lift to the wandering cloud your eyes
And let them scan the wandering Deep. . . .
Hark ye not there the wandering sighs
Of brethren ye as outcasts keep?"

Thereat the stranger bowed, and blessed;
Then, grave and silent, sought his cell:
St. Colum mused upon his guest,
Dumb wonder on the others fell.

At dead of night the Abbot came
To where the weary wayfarer slept:
"Tell me," he said, "thy holy name . . ."
—No more, for on bowed knees he wept. . . .

Great awe and wonder fell on him;
His mind was like a lonely wild
When suddenly is heard a hymn
Sung by a little innocent child.

For now he knew their guest to be
No man as he and his, but one
Who in the Courts of Ecstasy
Worships, flame-winged, the Eternal Son.

The poor bare cell was filled with light,
That came from the swung moons the Seven
Seraphim swing day and night
Adown the infinite walls of Heaven.

But on the fern-wove mattress lay
No weary guest. St. Colum kneeled,
And found no trace; but, ashen-grey,
Far off he heard glad anthems pealed.

At sunrise when the matins-bell
Made a cold silvery music fall
Through silence of each lonely cell
And over every fold and stall,

St. Colum called his monks to come
And follow him to where his hands
Would raise the Great Cross of the Dumb
Upon the Holy Island's sands. . . .

"For I shall call from out the Deep
And from the grey fields of the skies,
The brethren we as outcasts keep,
Our kindred of the dumb wild eyes. . . .

"Behold, on this Christ's natal morn,
God wills the widening of His laws,
Another miracle to be born—
For lo, our guest an Angel was! . . .

" His Dream the Lord Christ gave to him
To bring to us as Christ-Day food,
That Dream shall rise a holy hymn
And hang like a flower upon the Rood! . . ."

Thereat, while all with wonder stared
St. Colum raised the Holy Tree:
Then all with Christ-Day singing fared
To where the last sands lipped the sea.

St. Colum raised his arms on high . . .
" O ye, all creatures of the wing,
Come here from out the fields o' the sky,
Come here and learn a wondrous thing!"

At that the wild clans of the air
Came sweeping in a mist of wings—
Ospreys and fierce solanders there,
Sea-swallows wheeling mazy rings,

The foam-white mew, the green-black scart,
The famishing hawk, the wailing tern,
All birds from the sand-building mart
To lonely bittern and heron. . . .

St. Colum raised beseeching hands
And blessed the pastures of the sea:
" Come, all ye creatures, to the sands,
Come and behold the Sacred Tree!"

At that the cold clans of the wave
With spray and surge and splash appeared:
Up from each wrack-strewn, lightless cave
Dim day-struck eyes affrighted peered.

The pollacks came with rushing haste,
The great sea-cod, the speckled bass;
Along the foaming tideway raced
The herring-tribes like shimmering glass:

The mackerel and the dog-fish ran,
The whiting, haddock, in their wake:
The great sea-flounders upward span,
The fierce-eyed conger and the hake:

The greatest and the least of these
From hidden pools and tidal ways
Surged in their myriads from the seas
And stared at St. Columba's face.

"Hearken," he cried, with solemn voice—
"Hearken! ye people of the Deep,
Ye people of the skies, Rejoice!
No more your soulless terror keep!

"For lo, an Angel from the Lord
Hath shown us that wherein we sin—
But now we humbly do His Word
And call you, Brothers, kith and kin. . . .

"No more we claim the world as ours
And everything that therein is—
To-day, Christ's-Day, the infinite powers
Decree a common share of bliss.

"I know not if the new-waked soul
That stirs in every heart I see
Has yet to reach the far-off goal
Whose symbol is this Cross-shaped Tree. . . .

"But, O dumb kindred of the skies,
O kinsfolk of the pathless seas,
All scorn and hate I exorcise,
And wish you nought but Love and Peace!"

Thus, on that Christmas-day of old
St. Colum broke the ancient spell.
A thousand years away have rolled,
'Tis now . . . "a baseless miracle."

O fellow-kinsmen of the Deep,
O kindred of the wind and cloud,
God's children too . . . how He must weep
Who on that day was glad and proud!

MIANN

Miann ghaol, Sonas :
Miann bhithe, Sith :
Miann anama, Flathas :
Miann Dhe . . . gile rìdn gu brath.

DESIRE

The desire of love, joy :
The desire of life, peace :
The desire of the soul, heaven :
The desire of God . . . a flame-white secret for ever.

THE DIRGE OF THE FOUR CITIES

"There are four cities that no mortal eye has seen but that the soul knows; these are Gorias, that is in the east; and Finias, that is in the south; and Murias, that is in the west; and Falias, that is in the north. And the symbol of Falias is the stone of death, which is crowned with pale fire. And the symbol of Gorias is the dividing sword. And the symbol of Finias is a spear. And the symbol of Murias is a hollow that is filled with water and fading light."

THE LITTLE BOOK OF THE
GREAT ENCHANTMENT.

THE DIRGE OF THE FOUR CITIES

"The four cities of the world that was: the sunken city of Murias, and the city of Gorias, and the city of Finias, and the city of Falias." (*Ancient Gaelic Chronicle.*)

Finias and Falias,
  Where are they gone?
Does the wave hide Murias—
  Does Gorias know the dawn?
Does not the wind wail
  In the city of gems?
Do not the prows sail
  Over fallen diadems
And the spires of dim gold
And the pale palaces
Of Murias, whose tale was told
  Ere the world was old?

Do women cry *Alas!* . . .
  Beyond Finias?
Does the eagle pass
Seeing but her shadow on the grass
  Where once was Falias:
And do her towers rise
Silent and lifeless to the frozen skies?
And do whispers and sighs
  Fill the twilights of Finias
With love that has not grown cold
Since the days of old?

THE DIRGE OF THE FOUR CITIES

Hark to the tolling of bells
  And the crying of wind !
The old spells
  Time out of mind,
They are crying before me and behind !
I know now no more of my pain,
But am as the wandering rain
Or as the wind's shadow on the grass
Beyond Finias of the Dark Rose :
Or, 'mid the pinnacles and still snows
Of the Silence of Falias,
I go : or am as the wave that idly flows
Where the pale weed in songless thickets grows
Over the towers and fallen palaces
  Where the Sea-City was,
  The City of Murias.

FINIAS

In the torch-lit city of Finias that flames on the brow of the South
The Spear that divideth the heart is held in a brazen mouth—

Arias the flame-white keeps it, he whose laughter is heard
Where never a man has wandered, where never a god has stirred.

High kings have sought it, great queens have sought it, poets have dreamed—
And ever louder and louder the flame-white laughter of Arias streamed.

For kingdoms shaken and queens forsaken and high hopes starved in their drouth,
These are the torches ablaze on the walls of Finias that lightens the South.

Forbear, O Arias, forbear, forbear—lift not the dreadful Spear—
I had but dreamed of thee, Finias, Finias . . . now I am stricken . . . now I am here!

FALIAS

In the frost-grown city of Falias lit by the falling stars
I have seen the ravens flying like banners of old wars—
I have seen the snow-white ravens amid the ice-green spires
Seeking the long-lost havens of all old lost desires.

O winged desire and broken, once nested in my heart,
Canst thou, there, give a token, that, even now, thou art?
From bitter war defeated thou too hadst flight afar,
When all my joy was cheated ere set of Morning Star.

Call loud; O ancient Moirias, who dwellest in that place,
Tell me if lost in Falias my old desire hath grace?
If now a snow-white raven it haunts the silent spires
For the old impossible haven 'mid the old auroral fires?

GORIAS

In Gorias are gems,
  And pale gold,
Shining diadems
  Gathered of old
From the long fragrant hair
Of dead beautiful queens.

There the reaper gleans
  Vast opals of white air:
The dawn leans
  Upon emerald there:
Out of the dust of kings
The sunrise lifts a cloud of shimmering wings

In Gorias of the East
  My love was born,
Erias dowered with a sword
  And the treasures of the Morn—
But now all the red gems
And the pale gold
Are as the trampled diadems
  Of the queens of old
  In Gorias the pale-gold.

Have I once heard the least,
  But the least breath, again?
No: my love is no more fain
  Of Gorias of the East.
  Erias hath sheathed his sword
    Long, long ago.
  My heart is old . . .
  Though in Gorias are gems
    And pale gold.

MURIAS

In the sunken city of Murias
A golden Image dwells:
The sea-song of the trampling waves
Is as muffled bells
Where He dwells,
In the city of Murias.

In the sunken city of Murias
A golden Image gleams:
The loud noise of the moving seas
Is as woven beams
Where He dreams,
In the city of Murias.

In the sunken city of Murias,
Deep, deep beneath the sea
The Image sits and hears Time break
The heart I gave to thee
And thou to me,
In the city of Murias.

In the city of Murias,
Long, oh, so long ago,
Our souls were wed when the world was young;
Are we old now, that we know
This silent woe
In the city of Murias?

In the sunken city of Murias
A graven Image dwells:
The sound of our little sobbing prayer
Is as muffled bells
Where He dwells,
In the city of Murias.

"Wind comes from the spring star in the east; fire from the summer star in the south; water from the autumn star in the west; wisdom, silence and death from the star in the north."

THE DIVINE ADVENTURE.

FROM THE HILLS OF DREAM

I

FROM THE HILLS OF DREAM

". . . . . I would not find;
For when I find, I know
I shall have claspt the wandering wind
And built a house of snow."

FROM THE HILLS OF DREAM

Across the silent stream
  Where the slumber-shadows go,
From the dim blue Hills of Dream
  I have heard the west wind blow.

Who hath seen that fragrant land,
  Who hath seen that unscanned west?
Only the listless hand
  And the unpulsing breast.

But when the west wind blows
  I see moon-lances gleam
Where the Host of Faerie flows
  Athwart the Hills of Dream.

And a strange song I have heard
  By a shadowy stream,
And the singing of a snow-white bird
  On the Hills of Dream.

WHITE STAR OF TIME

Each love-thought in thy mind doth rise
As some white cloud at even,
Till in sweet dews it falls on me
Athirst for thee, my Heaven!

My Heaven, my Heaven, thou art so far!
Stoop, since I cannot climb:
I would this wandering fire were lost
In thee, white Star of Time!

GREEN BRANCHES

Wave, wave, green branches, wave me far away
To where the forest deepens and the hill-winds, sleeping, stay :
Where Peace doth fold her twilight wings, and through the heart of day
There goes the rumour of passing hours grown faint and grey.

Wave, wave, green branches, my heart like a bird doth hover
Above the nesting-place your green-gloom shadows cover :
O come to my nesting heart, come close, come close, bend over,
Joy of my heart, my life, my prince, my lover !

SHULE, SHULE, SHULE, AGRAH![1]

His face was glad as dawn to me,
His breath was sweet as dusk to me,
His eyes were burning flames to me,
Shule, Shule, Shule, agrah!

The broad noon-day was night to me,
The full-moon night was dark to me,
The stars whirled and the poles span
The hour God took him far from me.

Perhaps he dreams in heaven now,
Perhaps he doth in worship bow,
A white flame round his foam-white brow,
Shule, Shule, Shule, agrah!

I laugh to think of him like this,
Who once found all his joy and bliss
Against my heart, against my kiss,
Shule, Shule, Shule, agrah!

Star of my joy, art still the same
Now thou hast gotten a new name?
Pulse of my heart, my Blood, my Flame,
Shule, Shule, Shule, agrah!

[1] I do not give the correct spelling of the Gaelic. The line signifies "Move, move, move to me, my Heart's Love."

LORD OF MY LIFE

He laid his dear face next to mine,
His eyes aflame burned close to mine,
His heart to mine, his lips to mine,
O he was mine, all mine, all mine.

Drunk with old wine of love I was,
Drunk as the wild bee in the grass:
Yea, as the wild bee in the grass,
Drunk, drunk, with wine of love I was!

His lips of life to me were fief,
Beneath him I was but a leaf
Blown by the wind, a shaken leaf,
Yea, as the sickle reaps the sheaf,
My Grief.
He reaped me as a gathered sheaf!

His to be gathered, his the bliss,
But not a greater bliss than this!
All of the empty world to miss
For wild redemption of his kiss!
My Grief!

For hell was lost, though heaven was brief
Sphered in the universe of thy kiss—
So cries to thee thy fallen leaf,
Thy gathered sheaf,
Lord of my life, my Pride, my Chief,
My Grief!

THE LONELY HUNTER

GREEN branches, green branches, I see you beckon;
I follow!
Sweet is the place you guard, there in the rowan-tree hollow.
There he lies in the darkness, under the frail white flowers,
Heedless at last, in the silence, of these sweet mid-summer hours.

But sweeter, it may be, the moss whereon he is sleeping now,
And sweeter the fragrant flowers that may crown his moon-white brow:
And sweeter the shady place deep in an Eden hollow
Wherein he dreams I am with him—and, dreaming, whispers, "Follow!"

Green wind from the green-gold branches, what is the song you bring?
What are all songs for me, now, who no more care to sing?
Deep in the heart of Summer, sweet is life to me still,
But my heart is a lonely hunter that hunts on a lonely hill.

Green is that hill and lonely, set far in a shadowy place;
White is the hunter's quarry, a lost-loved human face:
O hunting heart, shall you find it, with arrow of failing breath,
Led o'er a green hill lonely by the shadowy hound of Death?

Green branches, green branches, you sing of a sorrow olden,
But now it is midsummer weather, earth-young, sun-ripe, golden:
Here I stand and I wait, here in the rowan-tree hollow,
But never a green leaf whispers, "Follow, oh, Follow, Follow!"

O never a green leaf whispers, where the green-gold branches swing:
O never a song I hear now, where one was wont to sing
Here in the heart of Summer, sweet is life to me still,
But my heart is a lonely hunter that hunts on a lonely hill.

COR CORDIUM

Sweet Heart, true heart, strong heart, star of my life, oh, never
For thee the lowered banner, the lost endeavour!
The weapons are still unforged that thee and me shall dissever,
For I in thy heart have dwelling, and thou hast in mine for ever.

Can a silken cord strangle love, or a steel sword sever?
Or be as a bruisèd reed, the flow'r of joy for ever?
Love is a beautiful dream, a deathless endeavour,
And for thee the lowered banner, O Sweet Heart never!

MO-LENNAV-A-CHREE

Eily, Eily, Eily, dear to me, dear and sweet,
In dreams I am hearing the sound of your little running feet—
The sound of your running feet that like the sea-hoofs beat
A music by day and night, Eily, on the sands of my heart, my Sweet!

Eily, blue i' the eyes, flower-sweet as children are,
And white as the canna that blows with the hill breast wind afar,
Whose is the light in thine eyes—the light of a star?—a star
That sitteth supreme where the starry lights of heaven a glory are!

Eily, Eily, Eily, put off your wee hands from the heart o' me,
It is pain they are making there, where no more pain should be:
For little running feet, an' wee white hands, an' croodlin' as of the sea,
Bring tears to my eyes, Eily, tears, tears, out of the heart o' me—
Mo-lennav-a-chree,
Mo-lennav-a-chree!

HUSHING SONG

Eily, Eily,
My bonny wee lass:
The winds blow,
And the hours pass.

But never a wind
Can do thee wrong,
Brown Birdeen, singing
Thy bird-heart song.

And never an hour
But has for thee
Blue of the heaven
And green of the sea:

Blue for the hope of thee,
Eily, Eily;
Green for the joy of thee,
Eily, Eily.

Swing in thy nest then,
Here on my heart,
Birdeen, Birdeen,
Here on my heart,
Here on my heart!

LULLABY

LENNAVAN-MO,
Lennavan-mo,
Who is it swinging you to and fro,
With a long low swing and a sweet low croon,
And the loving words of the mother's rune?

Lennavan-mo,
Lennavan-mo,
Who is it swinging you to and fro?
I am thinking it is an angel fair,
The Angel that looks on the gulf from the lowest stair
And swings the green world upward by its leagues of sunshine hair.

Lennavan-mo,
Lennavan-mo,
Who swingeth you and the Angel to and fro?
It is He whose faintest thought is a world afar,
It is He whose wish is a leaping seven-moon'd star,
It is He, Lennavan-mo,
To whom you and I and all things flow.

Lennavan-mo,
Lennavan-mo,
It is only a little wee lass you are, Eily-mo-chree,
But as this wee blossom has roots in the depths of the sky,
So you are at one with the Lord of Eternity—
Bonnie wee lass that you are,
My morning-star,
Eily-mo-chree, Lennavan-mo,
Lennavan-mo.

THE BUGLES OF DREAMLAND

Swiftly the dews of the gloaming are falling:
Faintly the bugles of Dreamland are calling.
O hearken, my darling, the elf-flutes are blowing
The shining-eyed folk from the hillside are flowing,
I' the moonshine the wild-apple blossoms are snowing,
And louder and louder where the white dews are falling
The far-away bugles of Dreamland are calling.

O what are the bugles of Dreamland calling
There where the dews of the gloaming are falling?
Come away from the weary old world of tears,
Come away, come away to where one never hears
The slow weary drip of the slow weary years,
But peace and deep rest till the white dews are falling
And the blithe bugle-laughters through Dreamland are calling.

Then bugle for us, where the cool dews are falling,
O bugle for us, wild elf-flutes now calling—
For Heart's-love and I are too weary to wait
For the dim drowsy whisper that cometh too late,
The dim muffled whisper of blind empty fate—
O the world's well lost now the dream-dews are falling,
And the bugles of Dreamland about us are calling.

THE HILLS OF RUEL

"Over the hills and far away"—
That is the tune I heard one day
When heather-drowsy I lay and listened
And watched where the stealthy sea-tide glistened

Beside me there on the Hills of Ruel
An old man stooped and gathered fuel—
And I asked him this: if his son were dead,
As the folk in Glendaruel all said,
How could he still believe that never
Duncan had crossed the shadowy river.

Forth from his breast the old man drew
A lute that once on a rowan-tree grew:
And, speaking no words, began to play
"Over the hills and far away."

"But how do you know," I said, thereafter,
"That Duncan has heard the fairy laughter?
How do you know he has followed the cruel
Honey-sweet folk of the Hills of Ruel?"
"How do I know?" the old man said,
"Sure I know well my boy's not dead:
For late on the morrow they hid him, there
Where the black earth moistens his yellow hair,
I saw him alow on the moor close by,
I watched him low on the hillside lie,
An' I heard him laughin' wild up there,
An' talk, talk, talkin' beneath his hair—
For down o'er his face his long hair lay
But I saw it was cold and ashy grey.

Ay, laughin' and talkin' wild he was,
An' that to a Shadow out on the grass,
A Shadow that made my blood go chill,
For never its like have I seen on the hill.
An' the moon came up, and the stars grew white,
An' the hills grew black in the bloom o' the night,
An' I watched till the death-star sank in the moon
And the moonmaid fled with her flittermice shoon,
Then the Shadow that lay on the moorside there
Rose up and shook its wildmoss hair,
And Duncan he laughed no more, but grey
As the rainy dust of a rainy day,
Went over the hills and far away."

"Over the hills and far away"—
That is the tune I heard one day.
O that I too might hear the cruel
Honey-sweet folk of the Hills of Ruel.

CATHAIR-SITH

From green to white, from white to green,
I watch the waves that wash between
The Rainbow-Pillars none hath seen.

God takes a wind from out the sky:
It spreads its cloud-white wings to fly;
Its time hath come to it to die.

God takes a wind from out the pines:
It spreads its green-gloom wings, and shines
Gold-green against the Rainbow-Signs.

The weaving of the Sea is made
Green, thus, with sacred pine-tree shade;
White the cloud feathers overlaid.

For ever thus the green is spun,
The white across the surface run:
This is the rune that I have won.

This is the rune hath come to me
Out of the mystery of the sea;
When dreaming, where, far-off, may be
The Rainbow-Pillars of Caershee.[1]

[1] Cathair-Sith, pronounced Caershee.

THE BANDRUIDH[1]

My robe is of green,
  My crown is of stars—
The grass is the green
  And the daisies the stars:
O'er lochan and streamlet
  My breath moveth sweet . . .
Bonnie blue lochans,
  Hillwaters fleet.

The song in my heart
  Is the song of the birds,
And the wind in my heart
  Is the lowing of herds:
The light in my eyes,
  And the breath of my mouth,
Are the clouds of spring-skies
  And the sound of the South.

(*The Airs of Spring.*)

Grass-green from thy mouth
The sweet sound of the South!

[1] The Bandruidh—lit. the Druidess, *i.e.* the Sorceress: poetically, the Green Lady, *i.e.* Spring.

DREAM FANTASY

"If Death Sleep's brother be,
And souls bereft of sense have so sweet dreams,
How could I wish thus still to dream and die!"
("*Madrigal*")
William Drummond of Hawthornden.

THERE is a land of Dream;
I have trodden its golden ways:
I have seen its amber light
From the heart of its sun-swept days;
I have seen its moonshine white
On its silent waters gleam—
Ah, the strange sweet lonely delight
Of the Valleys of Dream.

Ah, in that Land of Dream,
The mystical moon-white land,
Comes from what unknown sea—
Adream on what unknown strand—
A sound as of feet that flee,
As of multitudes that stream
From the shores of that shadowy sea
Through the Valleys of Dream.

It is dark in the Land of Dream.
There is silence in all the Land.
Are the dead all gathered there—
In havens, by no breath fanned?
This stir i' the dawn, this chill wan air—
This faint dim yellow of morning-gleam—
O is this sleep, or waking where
Lie hush'd the Valleys of Dream?

MATER CONSOLATRIX

Heart's-joy must fade . . . though it borrow
Heaven's azure for its clay:
But the Joy that is one with Sorrow,
Treads an immortal way:
For each, is born To-morrow,
For each, is Yesterday.

Joy that is clothed with shadow
Shall arise from the dead:
But Joy that is clothed with the rainbow
Shall with the bow be sped: . . .
Where the Sun spends his fires is she,
And where the Stars are led.

AN INSCRIPTION

GREEN Fire of Joy, Green Fire of Life,
Be with you thro' the Stress and Strife—
Be with you thro' the Shadow and Shine,
The immortal Ichor, the immortal Wine.

Drink deep of the immortal Wine,
It gives the laughter to the Strife,
Drink deep, and thro' the Shadow and Shine
Rejoice in the Green Fire of Life.

II

CLOSING DOORS

O SANDS of my heart, what wind moans low along thy
shadowy shore?
Is that the deep sea-heart I hear with the dying sob
at its core?
Each dim lost wave that lapses is like a closing
door:
'Tis closing doors they hear at last who soon shall
hear no more,
Who soon shall hear no more.

Eily, Eily, Eily, call low, come back, call low to me:
My heart you have broken, your troth forsaken, but
love even yet can be:
Come near, call low, for closing doors are as the
waves o' the sea,
Once closed they are closed for ever, Eily, lost, lost,
for thee and me,
Lost, lost, for thee and me.

IN THE SHADOW

O SHE will have the deep dark heart, for all her face is fair;
As deep and dark as though beneath the shadow of her hair:
For in her hair a spirit dwells that no white spirit is,
And hell is in the hopeless heaven of that lost spirit's kiss.

She has two men within the palm, the hollow of her hand:
She takes their souls and blows them forth as idle drifted sand:
And one falls back upon her breast that is his quiet home,
And one goes out into the night and is as wind-blown foam.

And when she sees the sleep of one, ofttimes she rises there
And looks into the outer dark and calleth soft and fair:
And then the lost soul that afar within the dark doth roam
Comes laughing, laughing, laughing, and crying, Home! Home!

There is no home in faithless love, O fool that deems her fair:
Bitter and drear that home you seek, the name of it Despair:
Drown, drown beneath the sterile kiss of the engulfing wave,
A heaven of peace it is beside this mockery of a grave.

THE STAR OF BEAUTY

It dwells not in the skies,
My Star of Beauty!
'Twas made of her sighs,
Her tears and agonies,
The fire in her eyes,
My Star of Beauty!

Lovely and delicate,
My Star of Beauty!
How could she master Fate,
Although she gave back hate
Great as my love was great,
My Star of Beauty!

I loved, she hated, well:
My Star of Beauty!
Soon, soon the passing bell:
She rose, and I fell:
Soft shines in deeps of hell
My Star of Beauty!

AN OLD TALE OF THREE

Ah, bonnie darling, lift your dark eyes dreaming!
See, the firelight fills the gloaming, though deep darkness grows without—

[Hush, dear, hush, I hear the sea-birds screaming,
And down beyond the haven the tide comes with a shout!]

Ah, birdeen, sweetheart, sure he is not coming,
He who has your hand in his, while I have all your heart—

[Hush, dear, hush, I hear the wild bees humming
Far away in the underworld where true love shall not part!]

Darling, darling, darling, all the world is singing,
Singing, singing, singing a song of joy for me!

[Hush, dear, hush, what wild sea-wind is bringing
Gloom o' the sea about thy brow, athwart the eyes of thee?]

Ah, heart o' me, darling, darling, all my heart's aflame!
Sure, at the last we are all in all, all in all we two!

At the Door

A Voice

This is the way I take my own, this is the boon I claim !
Sure at the last, ye are all in all, all in all, ye two—

(*Later, in the dark, the living brooding beside the dead :—*)

Ah, hell of my heart ! Ye are dust to me—and dust with dust may woo !

THE BURTHEN OF THE TIDE

THE tide was dark an' heavy with the burden that it bore,
I heard it talkin', whisperin', upon the weedy shore:
Each wave that stirred the sea-weed was like a closing door,
'Tis closing doors they hear at last who hear no more, no more,
My Grief,
No more!

The tide was in the salt sea-weed, and like a knife it tore,
The hoarse sea-wind went moaning, sooing, moaning o'er and o'er,
The wild sea-heart was brooding deep upon its ancient lore,
I heard the sob, the sooing sob, the dying sob at its core,
My Grief,
Its core!

The white sea-waves were wan and grey its ashy lips before;
The whirled spume between its jaws in floods did seaward pour—
O whisperin' weed, O wild sea-waves, O hollow baffled roar,
Since one thou hast, O dark dim Sea, why callest thou for more,
My Grief,
For more.

THE SONG OF FIONULA

Sleep, sleep, brothers dear, sleep and dream,
Nothing so sweet lies hid in all your years.
Life is a storm-swept gleam
In a rain of tears:
Why wake to a bitter hour, to sigh, to weep?
How better far to sleep—
To sleep and dream.

To sleep and dream, ah, that were well indeed:
Better than sighs, better than tears,
Ye can have nothing better for your meed
In all the years.
Why wake to a bitter hour, to sigh, to weep?
How better far to sleep—
To sleep and dream, ah, that is well indeed!

DALUA[1]

I HAVE heard you calling, Dalua
Dalua!
I have heard you on the hill,
By the pool-side still,
Where the lapwings shrill
Dalua . . . dalua . . . dalua!

What is it you call, Dalua,
Dalua?
When the rains fall,
When the mists crawl
And the curlews call
Dalua . . . dalua . . . dalua!

I am the Fool, Dalua,
Dalua!
When men hear me, their eyes
Darken: the shadow in the skies
Droops: and the keening-woman cries
DALUA . . . DALUA . . . DALUA

[1] Dalūa, one of the names of a mysterious being in the Celtic mythology, the Fairy Fool.

IN THE SILENCES OF THE WOODS

In the silences of the woods
I have heard all day and all night
The moving multitudes
Of the Wind in flight.
He is named Myriad:
And I am sad
Often, and often I am glad,
But oftener I am white
With fear of the dim broods
That are his multitudes.

THE THREE EVILS OF THE NIGHT

(THRENODY)

In the great darkness where the shimmering stars
Are as the dazzle on the herring wave
Moveth the shadow of the end of wars:
But nightly comes as from a bloody grave
The Red Swineherd, who has no other name,
But who is grand and terrible, a flame
Fed upon blood and perishing lives and tears:
His feet are heavy with the bewildering years
Trodden dim bygone ages; and his eyes
Are vast and empty as the midnight skies.

Beware of the White Hound whose baying none hears
Although it is the wind that shakes the stars:
It is the Hound men saw in ancient wars:
It is the Hound that hunts the stricken years:
Pale souls in the ultimate silence see it gleam
Like a long lance o' the moon: it comes as a beam—
The soul is as blown dust within the wood
Wherein the White Hound moves and shadows brood.

Heed too the Flock of Birds from twilight places,
And from the desolate ways of ancient wars
Bewildered, terrible, and wingèd faces
Of souls adrift under the drifting stars:
But this I surely know, that the Red Flame
And the White Hound and the Dark Flock of Birds
Appal me no more, who never never again
Through rise and set and set and rise of pain
Shall hear the lips of her I loved whispering words
Or her hair cloud my lips moaning her name.

CANTILENA MUNDI

WHERE the rainbows rise through sunset rains
  By shores forlorn of isles forgot,
A solitary Voice complains
  "The World is here, the World is not."

The Voice the Wind is, or the sea,
  Or spirit of the sundown West:
Or is it but a breath set free
  From off the Islands of the Blest?

It may be: but I turn my face
  To that which still I hold so dear:
And lo, the voices of the days—
  "The World is not, the World is here."

'Tis the same end whichever way,
  And either way is soon forgot:
"The World is all in all To-day,
  To-morrow all the World is not."

WHEN THE DEW IS FALLING

When the dew is falling
I have heard a calling
Of aerial sweet voices o'er the low green hill;
And when the noon is dying
I have heard a crying
Where the brown burn slippeth thro' the hollows green and still.

And O the sorrow upon me,
The grey grief upon me,
For a voice that whispered once, and now for aye is still:
O heart forsaken, calling
When the dew is falling,
To the one that comes not ever o'er the low green hill.

THE VOICE AMONG THE DUNES

I HAVE heard the sea-wind sighing
  Where the dune-grasses grow,
The sighing of the dying
  Where the salt tides flow.

For where the salt tides flow
  The sullen dead are lifting
Tired arms, and to and fro
  Are idly drifting.

So through the grey dune-grasses
  Not the wind only cries,
But a dim sea-wrought Shadow
  Breathes drownëd sighs.

IN THE NIGHT

O WIND, why break in idle pain
  This wave that swept the seas
Foam is the meed of barren dreams
  And hearts that cry for peace !

Lift then, O wind, this heart of mine,
  And whirl aside in foam ;
No—wander on, unchanging heart,
  The undrowning deeps thy home !

Less than a billow of the sea
  That at the last doth no more roam,
Less than a wave, less than a wave,
  This thing that hath no home
  This thing that hath no grave.

THE WHITE PEACE

It lies not on the sunlit hill
  Nor on the sunlit plain :
Nor ever on any running stream
  Nor on the unclouded main—

But sometimes, through the Soul of Man,
  Slow moving o'er his pain,
The moonlight of a perfect peace
  Floods heart and brain.

DAY AND NIGHT

From grey of dusk, the veils unfold
To pearl and amethyst and gold—
    Thus is the new day woven and spun:

From glory of blue to rainbow-spray,
From sunset-gold to violet-grey—
    Thus is the restful night re-won.

THE LOST STAR

A STAR was loosed from heaven;
All saw it fall, in wonder,
Where universe clashed universe
With solar thunder.

The angels praised God's glory,
To send this beacon-flare
To show the terror of darkness
Beneath the Golden Stair.

But God was brooding only
Upon new births of light;
The star was a drop of water
On the lips of Eternal Light.

THE UNDERSONG

I HEAR the sea-song of blood in my heart,
I hear the sea-song of blood in my ears:
And I am far apart,
And lost in the years.

But when I lie and dream of that which was
Before the first man's shadow flitted on the grass,
I am stricken dumb
With sense of that to come.

Is then this wildering sea-song but a part
Of the old song of the mystery of the years—
Or only the echo of the tired heart
And of tears?

PRAYER OF WOMEN

O SPIRIT that broods upon the hills
And moves upon the face of the deep,
And is heard in the wind,
Save us from the desire of men's eyes,
And the cruel lust of them.
Save us from the springing of the cruel seed
In that narrow house which is as the grave
For darkness and loneliness . . .
That women carry with them with shame, and weariness, and long pain,
Only for the laughter of man's heart,
And for the joy that triumphs therein,
And the sport that is in his heart.
Wherewith he mocketh us,
Wherewith he playeth with us,
Wherewith he trampleth upon us . . .
Us, who conceive and bear him;
Us, who bring him forth;
Who feed him in the womb, and at the breast, and at the knee:
Whom he calleth mother and wife,
And mother again of his children and his children's children.
Ah, hour of the hours,
When he looks at our hair and sees it is grey;
And at our eyes and sees they are dim;
And at our lips straightened out with long pain;
And at our breasts, fallen and seared as a barren hill;
And at our hands, worn with toil!
Ah, hour of the hours,
When, seeing, he seeth all the bitter ruin and wreck of us—

All save the violated womb that curses him—
All save the heart that forbeareth . . . for pity—
All save the living brain that condemneth him—
All save the spirit that shall not mate with him—
All save the soul he shall never see
Till he be one with it, and equal;
He who hath the bridle, but guideth not;
He who hath the whip, yet is driven;
He who as a shepherd calleth upon us,
But is himself a lost sheep, crying among the hills!
O Spirit, and the Nine Angels who watch us,
And Thou, White Christ, and Mary Mother of Sorrow,
Heal us of the wrong of man:
We whose breasts are weary with milk,
Cry, cry to Thee, O Compassionate!

THE SORROW OF WOMEN

We who love are those who suffer,
We who suffer most are those who most do love.
O the heartbreak come of longing love,
O the heartbreak come of love deferred,
O the heartbreak come of love grown listless.
Far upon the lonely hills I have heard the crying,
The lamentable crying of the ewes,
And dreamed I heard the sorrow of poor mothers
Made lambless too and weary with that sorrow :
And far upon the waves I have heard the crying,
The lamentable crying of the seamews,
And dreamed I heard the wailing of the women
Whose hearts are flamed with love above the grave-
stone,
Whose hearts beat fast but hear no fellow-beating.
Bitter, alas, the sorrow of lonely women,
When no man by the ingle sits, and in the cradle
No little flower-like faces flush with slumber :
Bitter the loss of these, the lonely silence,
The void bed, the hearthside void,
The void heart, and only the grave not void :
But bitterer, oh more bitter still, the longing
Of women who have known no love at all, who never,
Never, never, have grown hot and cold with rapture
'Neath the lips or 'neath the clasp of longing,
Who have never opened eyes of heaven to man's
devotion,
Who have never heard a husband whisper "wife,"
Who have lost their youth, their dreams, their fair-
ness,
In a vain upgrowing to a light that comes not.
Bitter these : but bitterer than either,

O most bitter for the heart of woman
To have loved and been beloved with passion,
To have known the height and depth, the vision
Of triple-flaming love—and in the heart-self
Sung a song of deathless love, immortal,
Sunrise-haired, and starry-eyed and wondrous:
To have felt the brain sustain the mighty
Weight and reach of thought unspanned and spanless,
To have felt the soul grow large and noble,
To have felt the spirit dauntless, eager, swift in hope
and daring,
To have felt the body grow in fairness,
All the glory and the beauty of the body
Thrill with joy of living, feel the bosom
Rise and fall with sudden tides of passion,
Feel the lift of soul to soul, and know the rapture
Of the rising triumph of the ultimate dream
Beyond the pale place of defeated dreams:
To know all this, to feel all this, to be a woman
Crowned with the double crown of lily and rose
And have the morning star to rule the golden hours
And have the evening star thro' hours of dream,
To live, to do, to act, to dream, to hope,
To be a perfect woman with the full
Sweet, wondrous, and consummate joy
Of womanhood fulfilled to all desire—
And then . . . oh then, to know the waning of the
vision,
To go through days and nights of starless longing,
Through nights and days of gloom and bitter sorrow:
To see the fairness of the body passing,
To see the beauty wither, the sweet colour
Fade, the coming of the wintry lines
Upon pale faces chilled with idle loving,
The slow subsidence of the tides of living.

To feel all this, and know the desolate sorrow
Of the pale place of all defeated dreams,
And to cry out with aching lips, and vainly;
And to cry out with aching heart, and vainly;
And to cry out with aching brain, and vainly;
And to cry out with aching soul, and vainly;
To cry, cry, cry with passionate heartbreak, sobbing,
To the dim wondrous shape of Love Retreating—
To grope blindly for the warm hand, for the swift
touch,
To seek blindly for the starry lamps of passion,
To crave blindly for the dear words of longing!
To go forth cold, and drear, and lonely, O so lonely,
With the heart-cry even as the crying,
The lamentable crying on the hills
When lambless ewes go desolately astray—
Yea, to go forth discrowned at last, who have worn
The flower-sweet lovely crown of rapturous love:
To know the eyes have lost their starry wonder;
To know the hair no more a fragrant dusk
Wherein to whisper secrets of deep longing;
To know the breasts shall henceforth be no haven
For the dear weary head that loved to lie there—
To go, to know, and yet to live and suffer,
To be as use and wont demand, to fly no signal
That the soul founders in a sea of sorrow,
But to be "true," "a woman," "patient," "tender,"
"Divinely acquiescent," all-forbearing,
To laugh, and smile, to comfort, to sustain,
To do all this—oh this is bitterest,
O this the heaviest cross, O this the tree
Whereon the woman hath her crucifixion.

But, O ye women, what avail? Behold,
Men worship at the tree, whereon is writ

The legend of the broken hearts of women.
And this is the end: for young and old the end:
For fair and sweet, for those not sweet nor fair,
For loved, unloved, and those who once were loved,
For all the women of all this weary world
Of joy too brief and sorrow far too long,
This is the end: the cross, the bitter tree,
And worship of the phantom raised on high
Out of your love, your passion, your despair,
Hopes unfulfilled, and unavailing tears.

THE RUNE OF AGE

O THOU that on the hills and wastes of Night art
Shepherd,
Whose folds are flameless moons and icy planets,
Whose darkling way is gloomed with ancient sorrows:
Whose breath lies white as snow upon the olden,
Whose sigh it is that furrows breasts grown milkless,
Whose weariness is in the loins of man
And is the barren stillness of the woman:
O thou whom all would flee, and all must meet,
Thou that the Shadow art of Youth Eternal,
The gloom that is the hush'd air of the Grave,
The sigh that is between last parted love,
The light for aye withdrawing from weary eyes,
The tide from stricken hearts for ever ebbing!

O thou the Elder Brother whom none loveth,
Whom all men hail with reverence or mocking,
Who broodest on the brows of frozen summits
Yet dreamest in the eyes of babes and children:
Thou, Shadow of the Heart, the Mind, the Life,
Who art that dusk What-is that is already Has-Been,
To thee this rune of the fathers to the sons
And of the sons to the sons, and mothers to new
mothers—
To thee who art Aois,
To thee who art Age!

Breathe thy frosty breath upon my hair, for I am
weary!
Lay thy frozen hand upon my bones that they support
not,
Put thy chill upon the blood that it sustain not;

Place the crown of thy fulfilling on my forehead;
Throw the silence of thy spirit on my spirit;
Lay the balm and benediction of thy mercy
On the brain-throb and the heart-pulse and the life-spring—
For thy child that bows his head is weary,
For thy child that bows his head is weary.
I the shadow am that seeks the Darkness.
Age, that hath the face of Night unstarr'd and moonless,
Age, that doth extinguish star and planet,
Moon and sun and all the fiery worlds,
Give me now thy darkness and thy silence!

THE RUNE OF THE FOUR WINDS

By the Voice in the corries
When the Polestar danceth:

By the Voice on the summits
The dead feet know:

By the soft wet cry
When the Heat-star troubleth:

By the plaining and moaning
Of the Sigh of the Rainbows:

By the four white winds of the world,
Whose father the golden Sun is,
Whose mother the wheeling Moon is,
The North and the South and the East and the West:
By the four good winds of the world,
That Man knoweth,
That One dreadeth,
That God blesseth—

Be all well
On mountain and moorland and lea,
On loch-face and lochan and river,
On shore and shallow and sea!

By the Voice of the Hollow
Where the worm dwelleth:

By the Voice of the Hollow
Where the sea-wave stirs not:

By the Voice of the Hollow
That sun hath not seen yet:

By the three dark winds of the world ;
The chill dull breath of the Grave,
The breath from the depths of the Sea,
The breath of To-morrow :
By the white and dark winds of the world,
The four and the three that are seven,
That Man knoweth,
That One dreadeth,
That God blesseth—

Be all well
On mountain and moorland and lea,
On loch-face and lochan and river,
On shore and shallow and sea !

THE HOUR OF BEAUTY

Dim face of Beauty haunting all the world,
Fair face of Beauty all too fair to see,
Where the lost stars adown the heavens are hurled,
There, there alone for thee
May white peace be.

For here where all the dreams of men are whirled
Like sere torn leaves of autumn to and fro,
There is no place for thee in all the world,
Who driftest as a star,
Beyond, afar.

Beauty, sad face of Beauty, Mystery, Wonder,
What are these dreams to foolish babbling men?—
Who cry with little noises 'neath the thunder
Of ages ground to sand,
To a little sand.

DREAMS WITHIN DREAMS

I HAVE gone out and seen the lands of Faery
And have found sorrow and peace and beauty there,
And have not known one from the other, but found each
Lovely and gracious alike, delicate and fair.

"They are children of one mother, she that is called Longing,
Desire, Love," one told me: and another, "her secret name
Is Wisdom:" and another, "they are not three but one:"
And another, "touch them not, seek them not, they are wind and flame."

I have come back from the hidden, silent lands of Faery
And have forgotten the music of its ancient streams:
And now flame and wind and the long, grey, wandering wave
And beauty and peace and sorrow are dreams within dreams.

A CRY ON THE WIND

Pity the great with love, they are deaf, they are blind:
Pity the great with love, time out of mind:
This is the song of the grey-haired wandering wind
Since Oisin's mother fled to the hill a spellbound hind.

Sorrow on love! was the sob that rose in her throat,
I, that a woman was, now wear the wild fawn's coat:
This is to lift the heart to leap like a wave to the oar,
This is to see the heart flung back like foam on the shore.

Have not the hunters heard them, Oisin and she together
Like peewits crying on the wind where the world is sky and heather—
The peewits that wail to each other, rising and wheeling and falling
Till greyness of noon or darkness of dusk is full of a windy calling.

Pity the great with love, they are deaf, they are blind:
Pity the great with love, time out of mind!

O sorrowful face of Deirdrê seen on the hill!
Once I have seen you, once, beautiful, silent, still:
As a cloud that gathers her robe like drifted snow
You stood in the mountain-corrie, and dreamed on the world below.

Like a rising sound of the sea in woods in the heart of the night
I heard a noise as of hounds, and of spears and arrows in flight:

And a glory came like a flame and morning sprang to
your eyes—
And the flame passed, and the vision, and I heard
but the wind's sighs.

Pity the great with love, they are deaf, they are blind :
Pity the great with love, time out of mind !

Last night I walked by the shore where the machar
slopes :
I drowned my heart in the sea, I cast to the wind my
hopes.
What is this thing so great that all the Children of
Sorrow
Are weary each morn for night, and weary each night
for the morrow !

Pity the great with love, they are deaf, they are blind :
Pity the great with love, time out of mind :
This is the song of the grey-haired wandering wind
Since Oisin's mother fled to the hill a spellbound hind.

VALE, AMOR!

We do not know this thing
  By the spoken word:
It is as though in a dim wood
  One heard a bird
  Suddenly sing:
Then, in the twinkling of an eye
A shadow glooms the earth and sky,
And we stand silent, startled, in a changed mood.

It is but a little thing
  The leaping sword,
When in the startled silence of changed mood
  It comes as when a bird
  Doth suddenly sing.
But thrust of sword or agony of soul
Are alike swift and terrible and strong,
And no foot stirs the dead leaves of that silent wood.

THE ROSE OF FLAME

Oh, fair immaculate rose of the world, rose of my dream, my Rose !
Beyond the ultimate gates of dream I have heard thy mystical call :
It is where the rainbow of hope suspends and the river of rapture flows—
And cool sweet dews from the wells of peace for ever fall.

And all my heart is aflame because of the rapture and peace,
And I dream, in my waking dreams and deep in the dreams of sleep,
Till the high sweet wonderful call that shall be the call of release
Shall ring in my ears as I sink from gulf to gulf and from deep to deep—

Sink deep, sink deep beyond the ultimate dreams of all desire—
Beyond the uttermost limit of all that the craving spirit knows :
Then, then, oh then I shall be as the inner flame of thy fire,
O fair immaculate rose of the world, Rose of my Dream, my Rose !

FLAME ON THE WIND

O WIND without that moans and cries, O dark wind
in my soul!
I would I were the wet wild wind that's blowing to
the Pole!
I'd seek the plunging bergs of ice to cool my flaming
heart . . .
O Flaming Heart,
I'd drown you deep where the great icebergs roll!

I'd follow on thy beating wings the wings of the wild
geese,
I'd seek among the plunging hills the phantom-flight
of peace . . .
O is there peace for hearts of fire in gloom and cold
and flight—
Torches of night
Mid swaying bergs that grind the trampling seas?

O wind without and rain without, O melancholy choir
Of tempest in the lonely night and tempest-whirled
desire,
What if there be no peace amid the snow-clouds of
the Pole . . .
O Burning Soul,
Can hills of ice assuage this whirling fire!

O wet wild wind bow down dark wings and winnow
me away,
Whirl me on mighty shadowy wings where's neither
night nor day,
Where 'mid the plunging bergs of ice may fade a
whirling flame . . .
O Heart of Flame! . . .
'Mid dirges of white shapes that plunge and sway.

THE ROSE OF THE NIGHT

There is an old mystical legend that when a soul among the dead woos a soul among the living, so that both may be reborn as one, the sign is a dark rose, or a rose of flame, in the heart of the night.

The dark rose of thy mouth
Draw nigher, draw nigher!
Thy breath is the wind of the south,
A wind of fire,
The wind and the rose and darkness, O Rose of my Desire!

Deep silence of the night,
Husht like a breathless lyre,
Save the sea's thunderous might,
Dim, menacing, dire,
Silence and wind and sea, they are thee, O Rose of my Desire!

As a wind-eddying flame
Leaping higher and higher,
Thy soul, thy secret name,
Leaps thro' Death's blazing pyre,
Kiss me, Imperishable Fire, dark Rose, O Rose of my Desire!

I-BRASÎL

THERE's sorrow on the wind, my grief, there's sorrow on the wind,
Old and grey!
I hear it whispering, calling, where the last stars touch the sea,
Where the cloud creeps down the hill, and the leaf shakes on the tree,
There's sorrow on the wind and it's calling low to me
Come away! Come away!

There's sorrow in the world, O wind, there's sorrow in my heart
Night and day:
So why should I not listen to the song you sing to me?
The hill cloud falls away in rain, the leaf whirls from the tree,
And peace may live in I-Brasîl where the last stars touch the sea
Far away, far away.

LOVE AND SORROW

Love said one morn to Sorrow
"Lend me your robe of grey,
And here is mine so gay:
Please borrow,
And each the other be until to-morrow."

At morn they met and parted:
Each had her own again;
But each a new-felt pain;
Broken-hearted,
Love; and Sorrow, broken-hearted.

Love sighed "No more I'll borrow:
I'll never more be glad."
. . . "Can Love be oh so sad,"
Sighed Sorrow:
And so they kissed and parted on that morrow.

But when these lovers parted
God made them seem as one—
"For so My will is done
Among the broken-hearted,"
He said; "O ye who are broken-hearted."

SONG IN MY HEART[1]

Song-in-my-heart, my heart's sorrow, my delight,
I hear a thin whistling as of a high arrow in flight
Or when the wind suddenly leaps, leaving the grass snowy-white:
Is it your voice, Song-in-my-heart, that calls to me to-night?

It is dark here, my Love, my Pulse, my Heart, my Flame:
Dark the night, dark with wind and cloud, the wind without aim
Baffled and blind, the cloud low, broken, dragging, lame,
And a stir in the darkness at the end of the room sighing my name, whispering my name!

Is that the sea calling, or the hounds of the sea, or the wind's hounds
Baffling billow on billow, wave into wave, with trampling sounds
As of herds confusedly crowding gorges?—or with leaps and bounds
The narwhals in the polar seas crashing between ice-grown mounds?

Great is that dark noise under the black north wind
Out on the sea to-night: but still it is—still as the frost that bind
The stark inland waters in green depths where ice-bergs grind—
In this noise of shaking storm in my heart and this blast sweeping my mind.

[1] *Oran-a-chridhe*, "Song in my heart," a term of endearment.

MO BRÒN!

(*A song on the wind*)

O come across the grey wild seas,
  Said my heart in pain;
Give me peace, give me peace,
  Said my heart in pain.

This is the song of the Swan
  On the tides of the wind,
The song of the wild Swan
  Time out of mind.

O come across the grey wild seas,
  O give me a token!
My head is on my knees,
  My heart is broken.

This is the song of the Heart
  On the tides of Sorrow:
This is the song of my heart
  To-day and to-morrow.

SORROW

THE wrack is lapping in the pools, the sea's lip feels the sand,
Upon the mussel-purple rocks the restless mews are wailing:
The sinuous serpents of the tide are darkly twisting to the land:
The west wind drinks the foam as east she comes a-sailing.

(*A whisper of the secret tides upon another coast,*
The windy headlands of the soul, the lone sands of the mind. . . .
That whisper swells as of a congregating host,
And I am as one frozen or deaf or blind.)

O Tide that fills the little pools along the sunset-strand,
That sets the mews a-wailing above the wailing sea,
Bring back, hold out, O flowing Tide, O with a saviour hand
Restore the long-ebbed hopes, some fragment give to me!

(*Along the dim and broken coasts the tired mind knows its own,*
By day and night the silent tides are silent evermore:
Around the headlands of the soul the great deeps moan,
Or with dull thunders plunge from shore to shore.)

THE FOUNTS OF SONG

"WHAT is the song I am singing?"
Said the pine-tree to the wave:
"Do you not know the song
You have sung so long
Down in the dim green alleys of the sea,
And where the great blind tides go swinging
Mysteriously,
And where the countless herds of the billows are
hurl'd
On all the wild and lonely beaches of the world?"

"Ah, Pine-tree," sighed the wave,
"I have no song but what I catch from thee:
Far off I hear thy strain
Of infinite sweet pain
That floats along the lovely phantom land.
I sigh, and murmur it o'er and o'er and o'er,
When 'neath the slow compelling hand
That guides me back and far from the loved shore,
I wander long
Where never falls the breath of any song,
But only the loud, empty, crashing roar
Of seas swung this way and that for evermore."

"What is the song I am singing?"
Said the poet to the pine:
"Do you not know the song
You have sung so long
Here in the dim green alleys of the woods
Where the wild winds go wandering in all moods,

And whisper often o'er and o'er,
Or in tempestuous clamours roar
Their dark eternal secret evermore?"

"Oh, Poet," said the Pine,
"Thine
Is that song!
Not mine!
I have known it, loved it, long!
Nothing I know of what the wild winds cry
Through dusk and storm and night,
Or prophesy
When tempests whirl us with their awful might.
Only, I know that when
The poet's voice is heard
Among the woods
The infinite pain from out the hearts of men
Is sweeter than the voice of wave or branch or bird
In these dumb solitudes."

THE BELLS OF YOUTH

The Bells of Youth are ringing in the gateways of the South :
The bannerets of green are now unfurled :
Spring has risen with a laugh, a wild-rose in her mouth,
And is singing, singing, singing thro' the world.

The Bells of Youth are ringing in all the silent places,
The primrose and the celandine are out :
Children run a-laughing with joy upon their faces,
The west wind follows after with a shout.

The Bells of Youth are ringing from the forests to the mountains,
From the meadows to the moorlands, hark their ringing !
Ten thousand thousand splashing rills and fern-dappled fountains
Are flinging wide the Song of Youth, and onward flowing, singing !

The Bells of Youth are ringing in the gateways of the South :
The bannerets of green are now unfurled :
Spring has risen with a laugh, a wild-rose in her mouth,
And is singing, singing, singing thro' the world.

SONG OF APPLE TREES

Song of Apple-trees, honeysweet and murmurous,
Where the swallows flash and shimmer as they thrid
the foamwhite maze,
Breaths of far-off Avalon are blown to us, come down
to us,
Avalon of the Heart's Desire, Avalon of the Hidden
Ways!

Song of Apple-blossom, when the myriad leaves are
gleaming
Like undersides of small green waves in foam of
shallow seas,
One may dream of Avalon, lie dreaming, dreaming,
dreaming,
Till wandering through dim vales of dusk the stars
hang in the trees.

Song of Apple-trees, honeysweet and murmurous,
When the night-wind fills the branches with a sound
of muffled oars,
Breaths of far-off Avalon are blown to us, come down
to us,
Avalon of the Heart's Desire, Avalon of the Hidden
Shores.

RÒSEEN-DHU

Little wild-rose of my heart,
Ròseen-dhu, Ròseen-dhu!
Why must we part,
Ròseen-dhu?
To meet but to part again!
Is it because we are fain
Of the wind and the rain,
Because we are hungry of pain,
Ròseen-dhu?

Little wild-rose of my heart,
Ròseen-dhu, Ròseen-dhu,
Where *I* am, *thou* art,
Ròseen-dhu!
If summer come and go,
If the wild wind blow,
Come rain, come snow,
If the tide ebb, if the tide flow,
Ròseen-dhu!

Little wild-rose of my heart,
Ròseen-dhu, Ròseen-dhu . . .
Time poiseth his shadowy dart,
Ròseen-dhu!
What matter, O Ròseen mochree,
Since each is a wave on the sea—
Since Love is as lightning for thee
And as thunder for me,
Ròseen-dhu!

THE SHREWMOUSE

The creatures with the shining eyes
That live among the tender grass
See great stars falling down the skies
And mighty comets pass.

Torches of thought within the mind
Wave fire upon the dancing streams
Of souls that shake upon them wind
In rain of falling dreams.

The shrewmouse builds her windy nest
And laughs amid the corn:
She hath no dreams within her breast:
God smiled when she was born.

THE LAST FAY

I HAVE wandered where the cuckoo fills
The woodlands with her magic voice:
I have wandered on the brows of hills
Where the last heavenward larks rejoice:
Far I have wandered by the wave,
By shadowy loch and swaying stream,
But never have I found the grave
Of him who made me a wandering Dream.
If I could find that lonely place
And him who lies asleep therein,
I'd bow my head and kiss his face
And sleep and rest and peace would win.

He made me, he who lies asleep
Hidden in some forgotten spot
Where winds sweep and rains weep
And foot of wayfarer cometh not:
He made me, Merlin, ages ago,
He shaped me in an idle hour,
He made a heart of fire to glow
And hid it in an April shower!
For I am but a shower that calls
A thin sweet song of rain, and pass:
Even the wind-whirled leaf that falls
Lingers awhile within the grass,
But I am blown from hill to vale,
From vale to hill like a bird's cry
That shepherds hear a far-off wail
And woodfolk as a drowsy sigh.

And I am tired, whom Merlin made.
I would lie down in the heart of June
And fall asleep in a leafy shade
And wake not till in the Faery Moon
Merlin shall rise our lord and king,
To leave for aye the tribes of Man,
And let the clarion summons ring
The kingdom of the Immortal Clan.
If but in some green place I'd see
An ancient tangled moss-like beard
And half-buried boulder of a knee
I should not flutter away afeared!
With leap of joy, with low glad cry
I'd sink beside the Sleeper fair:
He would not grudge my fading sigh
In the ancient stillness brooding there.

THE DIRGE OF 'CLAN SIUBHAIL'

(*The Wandering Folk*)

Sorrow upon me on the grass and on the wandering road:
My heart is heavy in the morn and heavier still at night.
Sometimes I rest in a quiet place and lay me down my heavy load,
And watch in the dewy valley the coming of light after light,
Watch on the dusky hill and the darkening plain the coming of light after light.

At dawn I am stirring again, and weary of the night:
And all the morn and all the noon I lift my heavy load:
At fall of day I see once more the coming of light after light:
And night is as day and day is as night on the endless road—
Sorrow upon me on the grass and on the wandering road.

THE EXILE

It is not when the seamew cries above the grey-green foam
Or circling o'er the bracken-fields the fluttering lapwings fly,
Or when above the broom and gale the lark is in his windy home
That thus I long, and with old longing sigh.

For I am far away now, and now have time for sighing,
For sighing and for longing, where the grey houses stand.
In dreams I am a seamew flying, flying, flying
To where my heart is, in my own lost land.

It is when in the crowded streets the rustling of white willows
And tumbling of a brown hill-water obscure the noisy ways;
Then is the ache a bitter pain; and to hear grey-green billows,
Or the hill-wind in a broom-sweet place.

THE SHADOW

"Do you hear the calling, Mary, down by the sea?
Who is it callin', yonder, callin' to me?
Last night a shadow came up to the rowan-tree,
And *Muirnean*, it whispered, *Muirnean, I'm waiting for thee!*

"Do you hear the calling, Mary, down by the shore?
Who is it callin', yonder, callin' sore?
Last night I came in from the rowan an' shut the door,
But some one without kept whisperin' the same thing o'er and o'er.

"Do you hear the calling, Mary, here, close by?
Who is it callin', whisperin', here, so nigh?
Give me my shawl, Mary, an' don't whimper an' cry:
I'm going out into the night, just to look at the sky."

Mary—Mary—Mary—wailed the wind wearily:
Mary—Mary—Mary—wailed the rain in the tree:
One! Two! Three! ticked the clock—*One! Two! Three!*
Out in the darkness rose the calling of the sea.

ORAN-BHROIN[1]

(A crying in the wilderness as of a little child is the symbol of lost love)

When all the West is blowing wild,
Is blowing wild
With tempest wings that fan the fire
Of sunset to one awful pyre,
I hear the crying of a child—
The crying of a little child
When all the West is blowing wild,
Is blowing wild.

The screaming scart, the wailing mew,
The lone curlew,
From shore and moor these voices rise:
The grey wind roams through ashen skies:
The West is all a blood-red hue:
Out of the glistering moorland dew
I hear a child's voice wail and rise
In mournful cries.

When all the West is blowing wild,
Is blowing wild
And shrill and faint along the shore,
By moor, or hill, and o'er and o'er
A child's lament is tost on high . . .
It is a love that cannot die,
A lost love weeping evermore
While all the West is blowing wild,
Is blowing wild.

[1] *i. e.* A song of sorrow.

AT THE COMING OF THE WILD SWANS

By lock and darkening river,
Above the salt sea-plains,
Across the misty mountains
Amid the blinding rains,
In fierce or silent weather
The wild swans southward fare,
The wild swans swing together
Through lonely fields of air,
Crying *Honk, Honk, Honk,*
Glugulû, ullalû, glugulû,
Honk! Honk!

The seamew's lonely laughter
Flits down the flowing wave,
The green scarts follow after
The surge where cross-tides rave:
The sea-duck's mellow wailing
Floats over sheltered places,
And southward southward sailing
Go all the feathered races. . . .
When the swans cry *Honk, Honk,*
Glugulû, ullalû, glugulû,
Honk! Honk!

White spirits from the Northland,
Grey clan of Storm and Frost,
Wind-swooping to the Southland
From icy-seas blast-tost. . . .

Wild clan of sons and daughters,
A welcome, now you are come
When all your polar waters
Are frozen, white, and dumb! . .
Crying *Honk, Honk, Honk,*
Glugulû, ullalû, glugulû,
Honk! Honk!

THE WEAVER OF SNOW

In Polar noons when the moonshine glimmers,
And the frost-fans whirl,
And whiter than moonlight the ice-flowers grow,
And the lunar rainbow quivers and shimmers,
And the Silent Laughers dance to and fro,
A stooping girl
As pale as pearl
Gathers the frost-flowers where they blow:
And the fleet-foot fairies smile, for they know
The Weaver of Snow.

And she climbs at last to a berg set free,
That drifteth slow:
And she sails to the edge of the world we see:
And waits till the wings of the north wind lean
Like an eagle's wings o'er a lochan of green,
And the pale stars glow
On berg and floe. . . .
Then down on our world with a wild laugh of glee
She empties her lap full of shimmer and sheen.
And that is the way in a dream I have seen
The Weaver of Snow.

A SONG OF DREAMS

One came to me in the night
  And said *Arise!*
I rose, phantom-white;
Far was my flight
To a star shaken with light
  In the heart of the skies.

Through seven spheres I fled,
  Opal and rose and white,
Emerald, violet, red,
Through azure was I led,
And the coronal on my head
  With seven moons was bright.

What wonder that the day
  Swings slowly through slow hours!
My heart leaps when the grey
Husht feet of Night are astray,
And I hear her wild bells play
  On her starry towers.

EASTER

The stars wailed when the reed was born,
And heaven wept at the birth of the thorn:
Joy was pluckt like a flower and torn,
For Time foreshadowed Good-Friday Morn.

But the stars laughed like children free
And heaven was hung with the rainbow's glee
When at Easter Sunday, so fair to see,
Time bowed before Eternity.

WHEN THERE IS PEACE

THERE is peace on the sea to-night
  Thought the fish in the white wave:
There is peace among the stars to-night
  Thought the sleeper in the grave:

There is peace in my heart to-night
  Sighed Love beneath his breath;
For God dreamed in the silence of His might
  Amid the earthquakes of death.

TIME

I saw a happy Spirit
  That wandered among flowers:
Her crown was a rainbow,
  Her gown was wove of hours.

She turned with sudden laughter,
  I was, but am no more!
And as I followed after
  Time smote me on the brow.

INVOCATION

Play me a lulling tune, O Flute-Player of Sleep,
Across the twilight bloom of thy purple havens.
Far off a phantom stag on the moonyellow highlands
Ceases; and, as a shadow, wavers; and passes:
So let Silence seal me and Darkness gather, Piper of Sleep.

Play me a lulling chant, O anthem-maker,
Out of the fall of lonely seas, and the wind's sorrow:
Behind are the burning glens of the sunset sky
Where like blown ghosts the seamews wail their desolate sea-dirges:
Make me of these a lulling chant, O anthem-maker.

No—no—from nets of silence weave me, O Sigher of Sleep,
A dusky veil ash-grey as the moonpale moth's grey wing;
Of thicket-stillness woven, and sleep of grass, and thin evanishing air
Where the tall reed spires breathless—for I am tired, O Sigher of Sleep,
And long for thy muffled song as of bells on the wind, and the wind's cry
Falling, and the dim wastes that lie
Beyond the last, low, long, oblivious sigh.

THE MYSTIC'S PRAYER

Lay me to sleep in sheltering flame,
O Master of the Hidden Fire!
Wash pure my heart, and cleanse for me
My soul's desire.

In flame of sunrise bathe my mind,
O Master of the Hidden Fire,
That, when I wake, clear-eyed may be
My soul's desire.

I saw the Weaver of Dream, an immortal star-eyed Silence; and the Weaver of Death, a lovely Dusk with a heart of hidden flame; and each wove with shuttles of Beauty and Wonder and Mystery.

I knew not which was more fair; for Death seemed to me as Love, and in the eyes of Dream I saw Joy. Oh, come, come to me, Weaver of Dream! Come, come unto me, O Lovely Dusk, thou that hast the heart of hidden flame!

THE SILENCE OF AMOR.

NOTE

Into this book are gathered the poems of "Fiona Macleod," with the exception of a few lyrics discarded by the author, and of two dramas, The Immortal Hour *and* The House of Usna. *The first collection of these poems—written during the years 1895–1906—was published in the early edition of* From the Hills of Dream, 1896, *by Messrs. Geddes and Colleagues, Edinburgh; and the American version, containing a selection from the original edition together with a series of new poems entitled* Through the Ivory Gate, *was issued in 1901 by Mr. Thomas B. Mosher, Portland, Maine.*

The Later Poems (1901–1905) are, in the present volume, grouped together in the section The Hour of Beauty, *under which title they are published in the United States.*

E. A. S.

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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